

**Academic Planning Committee
Final Report
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I. Preface:

The Academic Planning Group is composed of the Dean of the Faculty, the Associate Deans of the Faculty, the Vice President for Finance/Planning & Treasurer, and 10 full-time faculty members representing the breadth of the curriculum. These members include Dawn Abt-Perkins, Carla Arnell, Nancy Brekke, Muris Hadzic, Chloe Johnston, Anna Jones, Courtney Joseph, Matt Kelley, Nathan Mueggenburg, David Park, Davis Schneiderman, Erica Schultz, Lori Sundberg, Tracy Taylor and Sara Zelenberg. Dominique Allion provides invaluable staff support. The group began its work in November 2021.

The group's interim report (February 2022) identified five key challenges that the College faces in the coming years as well as key themes and priorities for academics at the College. The group formulated initial questions regarding each challenge and theme/priority, which need to be further explored by the College community to develop possible paths forward.

To reveal these potential pathways for future exploration, the group used most of its spring 2022 meetings to engage directly with various campus constituencies, in order to sharpen and refine our thinking about planning. These included the Career Advancement Center; Admissions; the Registrar; the chairs of ARRC, CPC, and FPPC; Information Technology Services; the DEI planning group; and the Center for Academic Success.

These discussions produced additional areas of consideration for academic planning, while also reminding the group, in each case, how the various offices of the College intersect with the academic mission. In particular, because the work of the DEI planning group was proceeding at the same time as our process, we could only be informed of the general direction of their work. DEI principles are closely related to all aspects of academic planning, and those who take up the efforts suggested in this report should do so with the DEI planning document close at hand.

In order to refine and prioritize the ideas that emerged from these various discussions, academic planning group members completed a survey that asked about prioritization of specific questions for further discussion and led to the report contained in this document. This report outlines what questions are most urgent for the College constituencies to discuss and what processes might be required to answer them.

While the considerations in this document represent meaningful work by a dedicated group, the relatively short time from the inception of this group to its report means that we simply could not be exhaustive. Given more time, we would have spent additional meetings further considering the information we gathered from the constituencies above. Further, the survey we used to prioritize planning concerns captured many important questions that we generated in our first months, but additional time may have led to additional questions or further refinements to the survey instrument. These caveats are not meant to suggest that we do not stand by the report below, but rather to highlight that the recommendations below elucidate some promising ways to address the key challenges and questions—but not all such ways. Further investigation will reveal additional questions, issues, and directions that fall underneath our general headings.

Structure of the Report:

- The report begins with key recommendations, described in more detail in the document, but highlighted in this first section.
- The report continues with the key academic challenges, which were identified in the interim academic planning report of February 2022.
- This is followed by content sections that identify questions that the campus community should engage with in order to respond to the key academic challenges.
 - In each case, the questions are prioritized as Tier 1 or Tier 2, designating those questions that should be investigated first and offering potential strategies for that investigation.
 - For each item under discussion, a number in parentheses indicates the percentage of respondents who rated the issue as a “medium priority” or “high priority”. The other choices were “low priority” or “not a priority.” These ratings were used to designate tiers:
 - **Tier 1:** The Academic Planning Group believes that responses to these above challenges are essential to consider in the near term, and these, together, make up our most immediate recommendations for action items.
 - **Tier 2:** The Academic Planning Group considers these issues to be important, although these may be of less immediate importance, or might represent wider divergence of opinion, in comparison to Tier 1 issues.

II. Priority Recommendations

1. Create a temporary **Curricular Working Group (CWG)**, jointly reporting to CPC and ARRC, to explore several of the questions identified in this report. While we must look to existing structures whenever possible for this work, a series of issues that exceed existing capacity calls for the creation of new advisory group. The CWG would particularly address the questions outlined in the [Academic Program Portfolio section below](#), although their purview might also extend to other areas. This group should directly engage the full faculty as it conducts its work.
2. Create a temporary **Faculty Experience Working Group (FEWG)**, reporting to FPPC, to address faculty work in terms of and in addition to specific policy questions. The policy questions relate to issues of real importance, including, for example, the use of student evaluations of teaching and advising and the counting and equitable distribution of faculty service. In addition, the FEWG would make sure that expectations on faculty are reasonable, that the College is fostering a healthy work-life balance, and that our faculty policies respond to the demographic diversity of the institution. [This group should directly engage the full faculty as it conducts its work.](#)
3. **Ask ARRC to regularly recommend shifts of permanent allocation**, informed in their process by the work of the CWG. This concept is discussed in the [Governance section below](#).
4. **Have the Student Success Committee take the lead in considering *policy* questions related to the student academic experience.** In so doing, they should work with various administrative offices and in consultation with all governance bodies and other campus stakeholders. Issues they should take up include: advocating for more flexible and accessible academic policies; drafting an inclusive tuition proposal; reconsidering the use of time slots and other scheduling issues; revisiting the role of summer and possible J-term in student paths to graduation; discussing a possible revision of the terms of part-time student status, and so on. These issues arise in a number of sections below, related to [flexibility in response to student needs](#) and the necessity of supporting a more diverse student population. New proposals, though, must take into account the impact on faculty and staff workloads (see below).

III. Key Academic Challenges

The Academic Planning Group recognizes a set of intersecting near- and medium-term challenges that our academic program (alongside other parts of the College) must address in the coming years.

1. Demographic trends are not favorable for future enrollment at colleges and universities, and the budget of the College is highly dependent on enrollment.

Lake Forest College has a strategic advantage in this regard: we have consistently recruited a socioeconomically and demographically diverse student body, which aligns directly with our mission and values. Nonetheless, the coming demographic cliff will make recruitment and retention even more challenging, and the competition for fewer available students will challenge many aspects of higher education.

We cannot take our appeal to students for granted. Accordingly, we must ask which programs will attract more students, and whether students will be willing and able to pay a higher proportion of our tuition. How do we continue to provide our high-quality education and how to our mission and values, in the most cost-effective way? What areas of the College should we strengthen to increase our attractiveness? How can we further improve our retention and graduation rate, while also maintaining our commitment to enrolling a diverse group of students? We remain a tuition-dependent institution. How can we strive to provide additional financial support for students in need?

2. The student body is changing.

Students are coming to the College with more varied challenges and needs, including disability accommodations, mental health challenges, differential academic preparation, and the need to work off campus to finance their degree. These challenges impact faculty, staff, and students, in the form of increased workload (for faculty and staff) and impediments to the traditional eight-semester plan for graduation (for students).

This changing student body also provides abundant opportunities for the College to reconsider how we teach and how we structure our curriculum for this new generation of students. How can we provide for thoughtful curricular innovation in line with our values? How can we continue to provide our students with an outstanding education that prepares them for the challenges they will face post-graduation? How can we ensure we have the proper support for these efforts?

3. Careers and outcomes are important to students and their families and will likely continue to increase in importance in the coming years.

The College has benefited from its consistent attention to this priority on the part of students; we even amended the mission statement to include “prepar[ing] our students for...productive and rewarding careers.” At times, however, our students’ understandable focus on career outcomes can (falsely) seem to exist in conflict with another closely held value of the

College: the breadth of education, as expressed in the Forester Fundamental Curriculum. Many students may not fully understand the value of that breadth, nor do they fully explore the range of academic programs we offer due to their predisposition to certain careers that they may believe require a narrower path and an earlier focus.

Accordingly, how do we adapt to incoming student interest in particular majors, while broadening and deepening their understanding of what we find most important in a liberal arts education? For students who arrive wanting to specialize, how can we ensure they experience both multifaceted approaches to their field and different methods of inquiry entirely—thus making them even more in-demand on the job market?

4. Students expect their areas of academic study to reflect the present realities of the job market.

We should continue to support innovation and change in our curriculum (including both our current and new programs) to ensure we have the right portfolio to provide vital, responsive, and forward-looking offerings. Such innovation, aside from evolving student interest, is essential to the strength and integrity of our academic program.

We recognize that, just as our students are changing, all academic fields evolve and change over time. This presents a challenge at both the course and the department/program level. How can we ensure that we are continuously improving and innovating—not only in what we teach but how we teach—in a manner that responds proactively rather than reacts defensively?

Our assessment mechanisms have been meaningfully strengthened in recent years; these offer one tool to prompt such reflection. What are other ways we can incentivize renewal in our curricular and pedagogical offerings, while also ensuring that the academic portfolio serves the students we have now, and the students we will welcome in the years to come?

5. Our faculty are an invaluable asset that must be nurtured and developed.

The College's faculty are qualified, dedicated, and talented. Many of us happily spend our entire careers at Lake Forest College. The nature of our work has changed, however, and the demands on faculty have increased significantly. We need to find ways to best support our faculty in response to these new challenges.

How can we promote a healthy work-life balance? How do we ensure reasonable and equitable workloads, and provide systems that offer reasonable and meaningful administrative work? How do we support our faculty throughout their careers to remain engaged, energized, and dedicated to our collective enterprise? How can we ensure that we maintain and strengthen the high quality of instruction, in the face of the abundant challenges outlined above? How can we ensure that we provide adequate support for the growing diversity in our faculty ranks? As noted in the introduction, the DEI report will have relevant recommendations that should be considered at the same time as the issues identified in this report.

Questions for Discussion and Action

1. The Academic Program Portfolio: What We Teach

How do we develop and maintain academic programs that will attract students and be economically sustainable?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Examine the resources we devote to departments and programs. Should we identify certain current or future programs for specific development? (100%)
- Build department/program resources to anticipate future demand, in order to increase enrollment. (94%)
- Provide additional resources to departments with reduced demand, to increase their attractiveness to students. (80%)

While these questions are interrelated and fall to various extents under the purview of ARRC, the College should convene a new temporary Curricular Working Group (CWG) to produce a series of recommendations for revisions to current processes and to create a system for the development of existing and new programs—including new program proposal guidelines that encompass sunset mechanisms. Further, the CWG should evaluate whether and how to specifically buttress programs that are currently experiencing less success. In addition, the CWG should evaluate the current allocation of resources to determine operational inefficiencies.

To be clear, the CWG is *not* a committee charged to reduce tenured faculty positions, but a forward-looking body that can anticipate how the College should respond to future changes to the full-time faculty (attrition and retirement); propose College guidelines for “need” in the tenure process; and develop strategies for how best to use and market the rich resources of people and curriculum currently employed at the College across all divisions.

Further, the CWG will develop position statements on the allocation of resources and criteria for assessing tenure-track and non-tenure track full-time positions. The current system for these requests, while improved in recent years, should be further refined to capture the complexity of decision-making regarding resource questions: namely, to what extent should resources follow current popularity of departments/programs, and to what extent should they be used to invest in the possible future strength of departments/programs, or to assert the values of the College’s education, regardless of popularity? The CWG should assess the processes employed at peer institutions, interview current and past members of ARRC, survey College faculty about challenges to the current system, and propose, if warranted, amendments to current procedures. The composition could include faculty members assigned by FPPC, ideally composed of the past ARRC chairs and members, the Director of Institutional Research, the Dean of Faculty or representatives, and staff support. The CWG should also review the analysis of instructional cost-per-seat by department that this committee reviewed early on, as this data may be helpful to their work. This analysis should be considered in terms of the academic mission of the College,

and not solely as a metric of cost efficiency. The CWG should be provided with any additional data they deem necessary.

The tensions between breadth vs. depth are expressed elsewhere in this report, and the CWG should also make a recommendation as to whether the College should appoint a senior faculty member or associate dean to be **more directly responsible for the Forester Fundamental Curriculum**. The person in this role would chair the Forester Fundamental Curriculum Implementation Subcommittee (FFCIS), liaise with (or serve on) the Assessment Committee, and work closely with the director of First-Year Studies. This director would serve as a resource for Admissions and an ambassador for promotion of the FFC. This position would follow from our discussions of the role of [breadth versus depth](#) in the College curriculum.

The CWG produces recommendations which would be enacted, if warranted, through the governance system. The CWG is envisioned as a temporary working group.

Tier 2 Concerns:

- Examine the curricula in departments and programs to ensure they are as “up to date” and “attractive” to students as possible? (60%)
- Articulate the importance of breadth vs. depth in a Lake Forest College education going forward (i.e., how much time/resources should be devoted to the FFC/FIYS vs. majors)? (54%)

While both issues are rated above 50% in terms of medium or high priority, the Academic Planning Group sorts these as having less immediate urgency compared to Tier 1.

Concerning up-to-date curricula: the College should provide information on increases or decreases in majors and students in departmental courses that follow significant curricular revisions, for review by ARRC and individual departments. CPC should work closely with ARRC when reviewing curricular changes, and in all matters related to the evolution of the curriculum. Further, the Office of Faculty Development should continue to offer incentive grants to fund curricular innovation efforts; the Dean of the Faculty Office should assist departments and programs in learning about how innovative peer institutions construct their curricula.

Regarding breadth vs. depth: this issue is complicated and potentially polarizing. The College has not taken a firm position on its identity related to these issues, and opinions vary as to whether we should allow students to specialize in their academic program more fully and earlier in their time at the College, or whether we should “double down” on breadth requirements. Naturally, these questions are fundamentally tied to the Forester Fundamental Curriculum and must become part of the CWG’s charge to explore.

In addition, the following groups should explore these issues:

The Forester Fundamental Curriculum Implementation Subcommittee (FFCIS), advised by the Assessment Committee, should take a snapshot of the state of the FFC and regularly issue a report to faculty about what is working and what is experiencing growing pains. This report should recommend adjustments or provide reaffirmations and is not a charge to “redo the GEC.” Far from it, as a new GEC is a significant change and takes many years to develop and flower. The report might highlight a lack of courses to support a particular aspect of the FFC, for instance. Yet, we cannot just assume “it will all work out,” and we need regular public-facing reporting of challenges that the College must address to ensure the success of the FFC.

The FIYS committee should consider how FIYS can stabilize its roster so that each year is less “hand to mouth.” The College should ask the FIYS committee to articulate and seek endorsement of FIYS staffing goals. Once identified, the FIYS committee should create plans for FIYS staffing that extend beyond a single year; the dean should build in FIYS teaching to specific continuing faculty contracts (as has started to occur in recent years); and the College should determine whether specific full-time positions should be created, as resources allow, to teach FIYS every year. Further, the FIYS committee should research similar programs at peer institutions, and consider approaches to shared readings, speakers, pods, thematic units, and co-curricular programming.

How do we provide students with the flexibility they (increasingly) desire while also being mindful of concomitant increases in faculty and staff workload?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Explore changing pricing to move toward “inclusive tuition” options (e.g., summer course/s are part of the tuition price; this could also lead to an adjustment of faculty teaching load [3/2/1, etc.]) (93%)
- Create more flexible schedules (e.g., more evening/weekend courses, use of summer term) (80%)
- Create more opportunities to teach students outside the traditional classroom (research experiences, career preparation, etc.) (73%)
- Explore changing pricing to make part-time study more feasible for interested students (73%)

For the two items that concern pricing, the Student Success Committee—working with various administrative offices and in consultation with all governance bodies and other campus stakeholders—should draft an inclusive tuition proposal that would account for financial aid, the potential distribution of teaching load, the potential positive financial impact on the College, and the implications for staff time to support an enlarged summer enterprise and a potentially adjusted academic year model. With particular attention to retention and graduation, the College should determine whether further “leaning in” to a year-round academic operation is desirable and feasible. The Academic Planning Group would not want any current faculty to feel pressed into summer service, and the option must work with existing interest and capacity.

With regard to flexible schedules, the Office of the Registrar and the Office of the Dean of Faculty should analyze current usage of course slots and identify areas of low slot coverage but high desirability. This analysis should then become comparative—when do peer competitors offer courses, and in what numbers? —to determine existing strengths and vulnerabilities. From there, current student levels of satisfaction should be assessed, and a plan to improve the schedule-building process to engage more predictive analytics should be undertaken. For instance, can schedule-building software identify optimal times based upon known students? This process must then lead to an assessment of whether expanded course slot offerings are possible or desirable given current staffing capacity and interest, and, only then, to plan for how to expand offerings to provide additional flexibility. Any changes of this kind would need to meet the capacity and interest of faculty and support staff, and to be assessed through the governance system.

Finally, the College should audit **current ways of teaching outside the traditional classroom structure**, identifying the scale of student usage of non-traditional credits (the recent passage by the faculty of practicum experiences is an example of a potential type of change). From there, departments interested in expanding research-based experiences for credit should be encouraged to generate proposals. Expanding the amount of teaching done outside of the traditional classroom structure has implications for faculty workload, the criteria for evaluating faculty, and the need for further faculty positions (perhaps continuing, non-tenure-track faculty). As such, it would need careful consideration from a workload lens.

Tier 2 Concerns:

- Offer an increased range of remote courses, alongside in-person courses (53%)
- Create more flexible programs of study (e.g., expand College Studies and the Self-Designed major; develop more tracks/concentrations within existing departments/programs; create focus areas not tied to existing departments) (46%)

The issue of remote courses was settled for the near term by the College's recently approved policy for non-COVID emergency remote teaching. Importantly, that policy must be reviewed every two years to account for the rapidly changing environment. In addition, and because the College endorses summer remote courses and accepts student transfer credits of remote courses from other institutions, we should explore the ACM's developing interest in this topic, which could take the form of remote course sharing and seamless transfer of peer offerings for our students who will transfer in remote credits.

Regarding flexible programs of study: This is an area that connects to many aspects of the College, and many stakeholders may have different definitions of appropriate flexibility. We seek here to address several interrelated issues. First, the current ARRC review of the Self-Designed major will explore this question for students who wish to pursue an area of academic focus outside an existing program; further, the Student Success Committee should weigh in on the feasibility of any potential expansion of the Self-Designed major. Second, the College should stabilize the resources for student development courses offered by College Studies, which are currently determined on an *ad hoc* basis; affirm the Associate Dean for Student Success as chair of the program; appoint the Student Success Committee as the program committee for College Studies; and ensure that College Studies enters the ARRC program review process. The program should have its initial review within three years, as a mechanism to assess current practice and to propose new developments.

In addition, CPC should bring a definition of concentrations or tracks to the faculty, and, if passed, departments and programs may make use of these structures for their own curricular development. In the case of focus areas not tied to existing departments, CPC should discuss the possibility of implementing programs in areas such as media production work, finance-related professional certifications, or non-profit humanities/arts professions, as examples.

2. The Changing Student Body—Those Whom We Teach

How are the demographics of our students changing, and how should that affect our curricular offerings?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Through the curriculum, address the career focus of many first-generation/non-traditional and traditional students (100%)
- Survey and address the major interests of first-generation students (including the practical and skill-building aspects of our courses or areas of study) (94%)
- Create/expand further programs/offerings that engage the experiences of historically marginalized groups, along the model of the AFAM department (LNAME, Indigenous Studies, Disability Studies) (84%)

The College continues to work to recruit a more diverse student body, both in terms of identity groups and socio-economic status. This raises foundational questions about the ways in which the College's curriculum should be responsive to the changing population of students we serve. To what extent should a curriculum be based on academic demands and values decoupled from a particular student audience? To what extent, conversely, should our curriculum evolve to meet the needs of the students we have? These will be questions for the Curricular Working Group as well as Admissions and other offices on campus.

A first step would be to obtain data about desired majors and academic priorities of incoming students over time, and then disaggregate that data based on identity groups, first-generation status, Pell eligibility, and so on. This would allow us to identify patterns in what students from different groups want from their education.

Even with such data, however, we would still confront complex questions about the extent to which incoming students have an accurate sense of what will be significant in their academic development; the ways in which an institution's educational identity should morph in response to demand; and so on. The College should neither ignore the needs and interests of its students (and its consequent attractiveness to potential students) nor chase trends. The case could be made, for example, that it is important to establish programs that offer coursework focusing on the experiences of historically-marginalized groups, whether or not such courses prove popular with the student population.

Conversations about this issue must occur that involve multiple constituencies on campus: Admissions, Student Success, OIR, faculty, staff, and students.

How will we support the needs of an increasingly diverse student body? These items reference specific offices or potential areas of adjustment.

Tier 1 Concerns: Offices and Staffing

- Disability Services (100%)
- Center for Academic Success (93%)
- Additional full-time faculty to support current programs (80%)
- Academic Technology/ITS (66%)

As noted in more detail in the DEI planning report, we must devote more resources to **Disability Services and the Center for Academic Success**. Adding more resources in Disability Services will respond to the growth in this area in recent years, and the anticipated growth in years to come; in addition, it will provide additional resources to support faculty when navigating student accommodations. Furthermore, this unit must engage in continued assessment and planning processes that can adjust and improve current programs, and develop others, including these examples:

- A program to support first-generation students that runs year-round, with academic, financial, co-curricular, and life-coaching support services
- An academic skills peer-coaching program
- Supplemental instruction in addition to one-on-one tutoring for highly enrolled introductory courses
- More COLL courses that work on student development skills
- Instructional support training for students with various disabilities (i.e., Universal Design for Teaching)

Because the Associate Dean for Student Success position is filled by a faculty member in a term appointment, the College must carefully consider staffing and leadership issues for CAS to ensure continuity and continued success.

The question of **full-time faculty to support current academic programs** must be addressed in academic program reviews, and by ARRC, informed by the work of the CWG. Our student-to-faculty ratio remains favorable, so we need to consider which areas of the College have proper staffing within that ratio, and we need to address imbalances when the College is confronted with retirement or attrition.

In order to address the last concern, **Information Technology Service needs to further their developing plans for supporting our students**. This connects to classroom technology and individual student technology, and this unit is already at work on new directions. These should be shared with the Library and Information Technology Services committee for consultation and review.

Tier 1 Concerns: Initiatives (separate from Offices and Staffing, but also Tier I)

- More financial advising resources (94%)
- More flexible financial aid packages (93%)
- Course material costs (textbooks and software) (87%)

The first two items are [addressed elsewhere in this report](#), while the question of **course material costs** can be addressed in part by additional promotion of Open Access Resources, led by the Donnelley and Lee Library. In addition, course material costs (including software) and alternative methods of access should be included in course description information and made available before the start of classes via syllabi (so that students can make advance purchasing choices). The Business Office should also develop a mechanism for students with financial aid to understand how they can access help (e.g., so that online materials can be easier to finance through financial aid and student accounts)

Tier 2 Concerns: Offices

- Registrar's Office (33%)
- Donnelley and Lee Library (40%)
- Global Engagement Office (34%)
- Center for Chicago Programs (33%)

These areas were deemed to have less immediate urgency in the eyes of this planning group (in terms of their direct support for our increasingly diverse student body), largely because of their acknowledged current success in providing essential support for our students. Nonetheless, these offices should each be charged—along with the offices in Tier 1—with preparing near-term work plans that will improve their offices in the next 1-3 years.

The Academic Planning Group also notes that in recent years the Office of the Registrar has become more closely tied to the efforts of the Center for Academic Success, and that its workflow has changed significantly. The Office must continue to improve its use of systems and technologies to enable more “frictionless” experiences for faculty and students.

Should we expand our non-traditional student population?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Expand our transfer-friendly and transfer-inclusive strategy (100%)
- Expand (and expand support for) our commuting population (100%)
- Expand other non-traditional populations (military, adults, learners with full-time day jobs). Might require flexibility not needed by traditional populations. (80%)
- Expand dual-credit high-school partnerships as a way of attracting more area students (67%)

While we often appear to visitors to be a traditional residential college, our location gives us a different student profile—as the first two points above indicate, we have a dramatically larger **transfer and commuter student populations** than many of our sister SLACs. Our primary competitors are not other liberal arts colleges, but rather larger Illinois universities. Accordingly, the first two items in this list recognize the reality of our current population. As of fall 2021, we had approximately 225 transfer students, which represented 15% of the student body but 26% of seniors, and approximately 500 commuter students (from the four-year and transfer populations). We have become a much more transfer-friendly and transfer-inclusive institution—in part through the creation in recent years of a new support position in the Office of the Registrar—yet we must now seek ways to better serve this population, including identifying challenge points in the curriculum. The informal Transfer Team, composed of representatives from Admissions, DOF, and the Registrar, should become a formal group with regular meetings, charged in the near-term with producing a report that will identify what supports are needed to serve the current population, and, in consultation with Admissions goals, to develop a plan for potential growth. The commuter student population requires a similar effort, to be led by the Office of Student Affairs, in partnership with Admissions, DOF, and other relevant offices.

The third point above, regarding **other non-traditional populations**, is related to the other two and should accordingly be taken up by these groups; this must be done sequentially, however. The priority order is transfer and commuter students, followed by new populations.

Finally, given that **dual-credit partnerships** have been approved by the faculty, interested departments should present proposals to CPC. The DOF can advise on the departmental commitment necessary to support such efforts.

Tier 2 Concerns:

- Explore graduate and community education beyond the MLS/MAT offerings (47%)
- Create a “transfer college,” which could have different GEC requirements, and advising structures (40%)

- Create a separate “college of applied studies” within the College: this college could have different GEC requirements, and advising structures, for instance (Education, Accounting Applied Arts, etc.) (27%)

These items would represent a more radical departure from the current College structure. Because these concepts are so different from our single-college model, and because they would significantly alter College operations, we do not favor proceeding with investigations at this time.

3. The Faculty Experience: How We Teach

How do we equitably evaluate faculty and ensure that labor is recognized?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Determine whether class-size guidelines should be revised (rewards for teaching more students, or some weighting mechanism, between, for instance, lecture vs. lab) (87%)
- Further clarify expectations for faculty work and to equalize faculty workload as much as possible (66%)
- Revisit assessment of tenure-track faculty performance criteria for promotion and tenure (the role of anonymous evaluations; the quality of advising; etc.) (60%)
- Explore the awarding of credit for labs, for both students and faculty (60%)
- Consider improvements to schedule-building support (better planning mechanisms to help departments schedule optimal courses in the best slots, etc.) (60%)

Addressing **class-size guidelines** would require the College to collect and share the differential teaching loads of current faculty, and this item should be given to the [Curriculum Working Group](#) as part of its charge.

The issue of **faculty work expectations** must remain in front of FPPC, as that committee continues to audit service. Additionally, FPPC should look to eliminate unnecessary service (although the Academic Planning Group recognizes the difficulty of this task). Further, FPPC's recent consideration of workload and work-life balance should continue through the [Faculty Experience Working Group \(FEWG\)](#). The issue can also be addressed in any new or revised faculty policies, and should be a categorical consideration in the development or revision of future policies. (The FEWG might also, for instance, explore whether we can provide additional resources for supporting faculty grants, as well as resources for supporting prestigious undergraduate fellowships and awards [to lighten the burden on faculty]).

College-level criteria for tenure and promotion are connected to the role of anonymous course evaluations and to the place of DEI efforts in tenure and promotion. These issues are discussed in the DEI planning report.

The issue of **lab credits** is controversial, and it is worth noting there are a range of opinions among the members of the Academic Planning Group. The College needs to complete an analysis of the benefits and costs of its current model, recognizing the value of our lab experiences, the strong outcomes for our students, and the needs of our faculty. We should consider issues such as the length of science labs, the frequency of labs, lab enrollments, staff support for labs, how students are credited for taking labs, and how faculty are credited for teaching labs. We must also recognize that faculty who teach other labs or extended periods (Art,

SOAN, Math, MLL, Econ) do not receive additional teaching credits for their efforts, and there are questions raised by this disparity of fairness in faculty evaluation and workload.

Schedule-building improvements should be taken up by DOF and the Office of the Registrar, working with ITS as needed, to allow better and easier schedule planning. [This issue is also important for concerns around flexibility in response to student needs.](#)

What lessons have we learned from the pandemic about teaching modalities and the need for flexibility/accessibility of learning?

Tier 1 Concern:

Expanded role of remote learning and/or flexible modality (73%)

This is the only item that accrued more than 50% support, and it relates to questions above regarding flexibility for students. It requires regular and further consideration through the governance system.

Tier 2 Concerns:

- Expanded availability of instructional design resources and academic technology resources (47%)
- Further development of “flipped classrooms” (e.g., multi-section introductory courses as flipped classrooms, with standard videos for all students, and hands-on work in class) (40%)
- Expanded resources for the Office of Faculty Development (OFD) (40%)

The first two items relate in separate ways to classroom instruction, and the Academic Planning Group suggests that the Director of Academic Technology and ITS work to survey faculty on areas of potential development. The College can then assess what resources would prove helpful, although we recognize that some of this is idiosyncratic to individual faculty needs.

The third item recognizes the current strength of the **OFD**; there is agreement that its current level of programming should continue.

What facilities development should be prioritized to allow faculty to do their best teaching?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Identify new buildings that could aid student recruitment (e.g., a fine and performing arts center?) (87%)
- Identify needed improvements in existing buildings (86%)
- Identify classroom technology improvements (73%)

There are many campus constituents who value the concept of a **new facility for the fine and performing arts**. Because facilities of this kind could potentially allow the College to attract students to these areas (in the way Lillard and Brown have done, respectively), and because our proximity to Chicago continues to provide opportunity for students interested in the fine and performing arts, the Academic Planning Group strongly endorses continued attempts to identify donor interest in this direction. However, because the College has identified endowment development as a more pressing concern than capital projects, this group endorses two separate near-term measures:

First, we encourage the continued development of the new Krebs Center for the Humanities as support center for fine and performing arts activities, along with the humanities more broadly (with the caveat that the Krebs Center does not have the physical capacity for larger productions and audiences).

Second, the College should identify **improvements to existing facilities** that can be accomplished in the near term. One example is the improvement of the Music Department practice rooms that is now underway; a less recent, but equally relevant, example is the Mellon Foundation-funded improvement of the Hixon Hall theater. Because certain academic buildings are aging or, like Carnegie Hall, are in need of significant attention, the College should carefully consider how space is being used in newer campus buildings and develop options to move relevant departments when feasible.

The third concern above requires ITS planning, and improvements are currently underway to the operations and planning side of that unit.

4. Governance

Should we conduct a comprehensive review of the governance system and procedures? It was last reformed in the 1990s—does it need a comprehensive review, given concerns about the distribution of faculty workload as well as other important issues? Further, how can the growing diversity of our faculty be effectively supported by the governance process?

Tier 1 Concerns:

- Discussion of the future role of part-time faculty; full-time non-tenure-track faculty; review and promotion opportunities for NTT faculty (100%)
- Empower ARRC to shift permanent allocation as needed (87%)
- Review of the governance system and procedures (80%)
- Address sabbatical challenges for small departments (80%)
- Establish clearer tenure criteria at the departmental level (67%)
- Improve College academic policies for student success (P/F deadlines, etc.) (86%)
- Review and revision of the faculty handbook (54%)

The status of **part-time faculty and non-tenure-track faculty** should be taken up by FPPC, with a goal of proposing standardization of titles, review, and promotion opportunities. The College should acknowledge that we already have a significant complement of full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty, and that the time has come to formally create this category in terms of review and promotion practices. This item is also discussed in the DEI planning report.

The question of permanent allocation occupies an ambiguous space in the governance system. To remedy it, ARRC should regularly recommend shifts in permanent allocation to the President. The [Curriculum Working Group](#) can help identify metrics for this decision-making, yet the idea that ARRC can only recommend temporary allocation and never shift continuing allocation from one area to another is not responsible stewardship of resources. ARRC should seek to manage College resources while keeping the faculty-to-student ratio steady and providing departments and programs with adequate resources to staff their curricula. Yet, the student-to-faculty ratio at the College level does not tell the story of specific pressure areas, and the CWG must also attend to this at the level of the individual academic unit. The challenges posed by **the governance system and the faculty handbook** are multifaceted. Governance committees should seek to identify the aspects of their work that might be improved were procedures different, and then convey those findings to FPPC. The College should offer staff support to CPC and ARRC, to aid in workflow and coordination. FPPC should seek to review the Faculty Handbook in the coming years to identify items that a) require updating simply because practices have changed over time, as well as those that b) represent questions about faculty work and governance. After assessing

the scope of potential change, FPPC may advise the creation of a new temporary group or may remand various identified issues to existing committees.

Sabbaticals are, again, part of FPPCs purview, and the committee has in recent years started discussion of this issue. FPPC should survey faculty on the efficacy of the current sabbatical policy, examine those of other institutions, ask ARRC to further consider the implications of not replacing faculty on sabbatical, and propose, if warranted, a revision to the existing policy.

Regarding **tenure criteria at the department level**, FPPC should ask departments to develop tenure criteria for research to create consistent expectations for junior faculty. These criteria can be revised and updated but should not be “implied.” [Departmental-level discussions should take place in the context of College-level conversations about equitable faculty evaluation.](#)

The Student Success Committee has taken up a number of **revisions to academic policies**, making recommendations to CPC, and this group should continue this important work. This is part of the multi-faceted work for the Student Success Committee that is envisioned for the years to come in the [Priority Recommendations](#).

FPPC should assess progress in these area in the next 2-3 years, and, after consulting faculty, determine if a larger governance revision may be warranted.

Finally, the College should regularly review the progress of academic planning and ensure that its direction provides support for our faculty ([see key challenge #5](#)). We must ensure that as we grow, plan, and amend our procedures in times ahead that we always do so with an effort to improve the work-life balance of faculty, ensure that faculty are given the time to pursue their work as free from unnecessary tasks as possible, and with institutional recognition of their continuing accomplishments.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Long-Term Strategic Planning Committee
Final Report
15 April 2022**

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Part I. Prologue

Lake Forest College has long emphasized its commitment to diversity, from its evocation in the mission statement—“We embrace cultural diversity”—to the progress the institution has made in recruiting a community of students, faculty, and staff who hold a variety of identities. This progress is noteworthy and merits acknowledgement. However, it is equally important to acknowledge the many areas in which progress has been slow or non-existent. Thus, we affirm that we are engaging in an ongoing process that is far from its conclusion. If we recruit a more diverse student, faculty, and staff community, but the experiences of members from historically-marginalized groups are not meaningfully equivalent in scope, safety, and opportunity to those of other students, faculty, and staff, then we will have failed in our mission.

Of course, the College does not operate in a vacuum; rather, it exists in a society marked by a history of systemic racism and prejudice that is, as a result, neither equitable nor inclusive. As such, perfection is not possible. Nevertheless, it is within our reach to continue the progress we have made, while addressing the work that still needs to be done.

Indeed, the College community has already begun to widen our perspective beyond the commitment to diversity found in the mission statement. For example, the Faculty Diversity Commitment Statement, adopted by faculty vote in February 2020, opens with a call to create “a truly inclusive community that allows all members to thrive, including those who are members of underrepresented groups in higher education.” This document and other recent efforts on campus are built on the insistence that we strive not only to bring a diverse community to campus, but that they find here equal opportunity, a commitment to challenging discrimination, and a place where every individual can feel a sense of belonging.

The faculty statement is particularly poignant in light of the pandemic that was on the rise at the very moment the document was adopted. The experience of COVID-19 has only intensified our understanding of the inequity in our community members’ experiences. Without minimizing the trauma of the pandemic for any individual, its impact was even more severe in communities of color, in poorer communities, and among other marginalized groups. We saw this first-hand: some of our students had to pursue their college education without easy access to the technology to attend remote courses; some community members struggled to find private spaces to do their work; some continued their education or work while also taking on other major responsibilities, such as jobs or caregiving. As the College slowly moves into the new reality that is emerging from the COVID crisis, we must keep these lessons squarely before our eyes as we consider how to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive College for the future.

To that end, we, the members of the DEI Long-Term Strategic Planning Committee, make a series of detailed recommendations for community action in the final report that follows. Our recommendations are animated by the following overarching principles:

We believe that we must continue to increase the diversity of the College community, including (but not limited to) diversity in: ability status, age, body size, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, health status, immigration status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socio-economic status.

We believe that we must commit to equity: that is, fair access to the opportunities and resources that community members need to pursue their learning and work at the College.

We believe that we must actively pursue inclusion, to ensure that all members of our community feel welcomed and affirmed. This includes both celebrating the identities and strengths of our community members and responding promptly to incidents of discrimination, harassment, and bias that occur.

We believe that when the College adopts the projects outlined below, it must commit to funding them, as opposed to folding them into the responsibilities and purview of current entities. Simply to add more work to the plates of faculty, staff, and students is not sustainable and would not reflect a true commitment to these principles.

We believe that we must build systems to assess effectively the success—or failure—of the projects we pursue and make change accordingly.

Finally, we believe that many of the systems, structures, and mindsets currently in place within our society actively work against the principles we cite here. These forces have become so entrenched that the work we pursue here will likely never be complete; crossing a metaphorical “finish line” at some point is not probable. Rather, we must commit to regular reflection about how to improve existing programs and find new initiatives.

Part II. The Planning Committee Process

The committee assembled in August and September of 2021. President Stephen D. Schutt asked us to have equal representation on the committee of students on the one hand and faculty/staff on the other. In this spirit of broad community representation, the President named tri-chairs: Anish ABEYSIRIWARDENA (student), Claudia Ramirez Islas (staff), and Anna Jones (faculty).

The chairs were joined by twelve committee members: Carlson Ayanlaja, Blythe May, Uche Okeke, Wiktorija Pedryc, Kaihan Rahimi, Ajit Sharma (students/alumna); Ajar Chekirova, DeJuran Richardson, Holly Swyers (faculty); André Meeks, Ed Neumann, Alondra Olvera (staff). In the spring semester, there were some changes to our personnel: Anish and Wiktorija had to step away from the committee due to other commitments; meanwhile, after her hiring in February 2022, Marianinna Villavicencio, Assistant Director of the Office of Intercultural Relations, has joined us. Finally, Gizella Meneses—who will take over Anna’s role as Associate Dean on 1 July 2022 and who will have an instrumental role in implementing some of these projects—began to attend committee meetings in the spring.

In the fall, the committee began by researching DEI planning efforts at institutions similar to our own. In particular, we were struck by the following documents (among others): the [Anti-Racism at Macalester plan](#); the [Community Plan for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity at Carleton](#); [Colorado College’s Antiracism Implementation Plan](#); the [AGB Board of Directors’ Statement on Justice, Equity, and Inclusion](#); and [NADOHE’s Framework for Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus](#).

Among the many common threads that we found in these documents from other institutions, we took particular note of the wide-ranging nature of their vision. The reforms and changes they proposed included reconsidering the key documents of their institutions; reorganizing the administrative hierarchy to better serve the needs of the campus community; addressing curriculum and academic policy; examining student life outside the classroom; assessing the accessibility of infrastructure and campus spaces; and so on. We were inspired by these models, as well as the charge we were given by President Schutt and the Board of Trustees, to think big.

While that kind of “big thinking” is exciting, it also required us to adopt an organizational structure conducive to discussion and generating ideas. We decided to meet as a full committee of fifteen people in alternate weeks for most of the fall. In the “off-week”, we met as three subcommittees: Academics; Personnel Recruitment and Retention; and Student Life. While these subcommittees overlapped in their interests and concerns, they were a way to conduct smaller-group discussions, research ideas that emerged from those discussions, and bring project proposals back to the main committee.

In addition, we held three forums on Zoom for the full College community in September, October, and November. Each forum was dedicated to collecting ideas and concerns surrounding one of those key areas: Academics, Personnel Recruitment and Retention, and Student Life. We also heard from a number of community members via email or individual conversations, which brought more ideas to our attention.

At the close of the fall semester, we were ready to begin writing up individual projects, both those to be implemented immediately (see “Part III: Priority Projects” below) and those to be implemented

over time, many of which we urge to be shepherded by a (yet to be appointed) Chief Diversity Officer, once that position is filled (see part III below). We created a template for those project proposals, ensuring continuity across documents despite multiple authors. The template asked the committee members to address the following in each project proposal that they wrote:

- Project Title
- Problem
- Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N); if Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional)
- Project Proposal Details
- Rationale
- Next Steps

We established a deadline of Friday 4 March for all committee members to submit their project descriptions. Over spring break, Anna Jones compiled these into a full rough draft and circulated it to the full committee for review.

After spring break, the full committee met several times to revise, supplement, and polish the report, and to identify our priority projects in two categories: those efforts that will involve significant fundraising to accomplish, and those that will require minimal or no fundraising. These priority projects were the result of discussion and a vote available to the entire committee ([see part III below](#)).

The remainder of the project descriptions in this report were the result of both individual and collaborative work within the committee. They were not “voted on” in any official way by the committee as a whole. We say this not to lessen the importance of these projects in any way, but rather to be transparent about the process that produced them. In some cases, an individual committee member or sub-group of the full committee had the expertise and the desire to work on a particular project, and the rest of the committee respected that commitment. Furthermore, we regard the assessment, prioritization, and implementation of these projects to be the purview and task of the Chief Diversity Officer (whose hire is one of our priority projects)—and the knowledge that the CDO will have oversight over this process meant that the committee did not feel the need to parse every facet of every project description as a full group.

We shall submit this completed report to President Schutt on Friday 15 April 2022.

Part III. Priority Projects

President Stephen D. Schutt and William A. Lowry, the incoming Chair of the Board of Trustees, were invited to meet with the DEI Long-Term Strategic Planning Committee midway through our work timeline. They requested that we identify a small number of priority projects amidst the many important projects and ideas that are described in [Part IV below](#). The Committee agreed with the rationale and motivation they presented for this request. After careful deliberation and discussion, a consensus was reached among committee members that the projects highlighted in this section carry the highest priority, as they are considered pivotal to the College being able to fulfill the aspirations detailed in [Part I](#). We reiterate that highlighting here what we consider to be the highest priorities does not sanction the neglect of all the other projects presented in Part IV. Although the Committee did not fully discuss or reach consensus regarding these other projects, as was the case with the priority initiatives presented here, each project in Part IV represents thoughtful and concerted effort of individual and subgroups of committee members. We present these priority projects categorized by those requiring significant funding versus those we consider to require minimal or no funding.

- **Priority Projects Requiring Significant Funding (3)**
 1. **Increase staffing in key student support offices on campus.**
 - The committee reached unanimous consensus that **this is the most pressing need for DEI work on our campus**. Currently, offices and individuals responsible for student support are either overworked (the Center for Academic Success, the Health and Wellness Center [particularly in Counseling Services]) or non-existent. This results in less effective student support, the overburdening of existing staff, and an overflow of work onto faculty and staff who do not have the skills to respond successfully. After considerable discussion and a vote, the committee identified the following four positions as the first that should be hired (and the first for which funding should be sought):
 - A full-time position in [Disability Services](#) (perhaps an Associate Director)
 - Two positions in the [Health and Wellness Center](#) to support student mental health: one for a full-time psychiatrist and one for a therapist whose specialties/identities complement the existing staff.
 - Begin to expand the staff of the [Center for Academic Success](#) with full-time hires. Our recommendation for a first hire is for a specialist in supporting either English Language Learners or the first-generation college experience (or both in one person).
 - You can find more information on these projects in the sections below on the [Center for Academic Success](#) (includes Disability Services) and the [Health and Wellness Center](#). We do wish to emphasize that the final design of these positions and choice of staff persons should be made by current staff from these offices, with expertise in the given fields.

- The committee considered a number of other sorely needed positions; each would be valuable, but we decided that the above are the most pressing. Among the other positions that should be pursued in the future (rationale and support for each of these staff hires is presented in Part IV—follow the links below):
 - A [Student Advocacy Coordinator](#) or [College ombudsperson](#), who can provide confidential support to students, faculty, and staff at critical moments—during a Title IX case, for example.
 - A specialist to support [undocumented students](#) (although this might also fall under the purview of an ombudsperson).
 - A [testing support specialist](#) (especially for students with ADHD and related learning challenges).
 - A single individual with training and expertise to support [international students/faculty/staff](#), particularly with respect to visa and related legal issues.
 - An [interfaith center director](#), to provide counsel and support to students with religious concerns.

2. [Reorganize the reporting structure of the College.](#)

- See the relevant section of Part IV (follow link above) for a detailed rationale and description of this initiative. While this initiative may not necessarily require a major fundraising effort, it is central to the hiring of an effective Chief Diversity Officer, which leads us to:

3. Hire a [Chief Diversity Officer](#).

- We need a leader at the highest levels to coordinate and manage DEI efforts across the College, and it is essential that this individual be put into a position to succeed. As is strongly urged in Part IV (follow link above), we recommend the hiring of a mid-career individual, who holds a PhD and brings extensive experience to the position. The successful candidate should be placed at the head of their own reporting structure and should have both Vice President status and faculty status.

Why are our highest priority recommendations so squarely focused on hiring? Put simply, the committee feels that we have reached capacity in our ability to do crucial DEI work on this campus at current staffing levels. In some cases, this is due to a lack of resources in key support areas—hence our hiring recommendations under number 1 above. In other cases, it is due to a lack of campus-wide leadership; while we have individuals and offices on campus who work hard on DEI issues in faculty-facing spaces or student-facing spaces, those efforts are often not coordinated or pursued as far as they could be. This is the compelling case for a Chief Diversity Officer.

- **Priority Projects Requiring Minimal/No Funding**

We urge that all of the following projects be implemented (in an order and process to be determined by the above-mentioned Chief Diversity Officer). This list represents top priorities identified by the committee, but in cases such as these, where institutional will is required, rather than funding, we are hesitant to firmly prioritize one project over another. We should be acting on all of them (see Part IV for detailed descriptions of each project—follow links below). Thus, we do not number the projects named here but rather offer them as an unranked list. Again, we emphasize that choosing the exact course of action should be the purview of the CDO.

- Create a transparent, streamlined process of immigration sponsorship and visas for international faculty, staff, and students, centered in one office or person. This will help to ensure that immigration applications are prepared, filed, and advanced equitably and effectively, within the limits of federal law. The full project description below ([linked here](#)) includes links to the procedure at peer institutions.
- Perpetuate and expand the [Student Equity Intern/Ambassador Program](#), which will establish a way to compensate students (with pay or with credit) for their participation in equity work on campus.
- Revisit the evaluation of faculty and staff, in an effort to create more equitable and transparent processes for a more diverse [faculty](#) and [staff](#); in the view of some committee members (but not a consensus), this effort should include [eliminating anonymous course evaluations](#).
- Give the research on the accessibility of [campus spaces](#) (already funded and underway) the attention it is due when it is complete, and use the information therein to create change in our students' experience on campus.
- Move forward on [equitable academic policies](#); notably, there was near (if not complete) consensus among the committee to initiate discussion about revising the registration hold policy in particular.
- Initiate the first steps in pursuit of the [land acknowledgement effort](#), possibly beginning with an open workshop for Indigenous People's Day 2022.

Part IV: Individual Project Descriptions

Section 1: Administrative Personnel and Institutional Organization

Institutional Structure and Reorganization

Problem: Several organizational issues around DEI at the College need consideration:

- Currently, certain offices whose work focuses on DEI and crosses campus constituencies are shoehorned into a reporting structure in just one of those constituencies. For example, the Office of Intercultural Relations (OIR), while technically under the Dean of Students in the campus organizational chart, has increasing responsibilities relating to faculty (e.g., the [Bias Process](#)). The OIR will potentially become more engaged in future in DEI issues affecting both faculty and staff as well as students. Because the existing structures of governance and oversight put OIR squarely outside of the faculty domain, the important DEI responsibilities of that office appear not to apply to faculty. We could say similar things about the reporting lines of the Title IX office, Disability Services, and the Faculty Diversity Recruitment Subcommittee (FDRS). These offices/committees should report to a new CDO.
- A Chief Diversity Officer must be given the authority to do the work they are charged to do across all campus constituencies. This means that they need to sit atop a reporting structure that gives them a team whom they supervise and whose members are responsible to them. Without this, the CDO hire risks becoming a figurehead or token hire.
- The CDO should hold a PhD and faculty status, as well as Vice Presidential status, in order to carry appropriate authority among all campus constituencies.
- In addition, certain offices whose work includes (but is not limited to) DEI work should also have a reporting line that reflects that. For example, the director of the Office of Faculty Development might have a reporting line added to the CDO, while also continuing to report to the Dean of Faculty. Other possibilities to consider for multiple reporting lines include the director of the Center for Academic Success and the director of Health and Wellness.
- The persistence of certain campus groups central to DEI work is uncertain, with the risk of losing institutional knowledge or duplicating work. As a key example: over the past year, the continued existence of the Intercultural Advisory Group (IAG) was questioned, because its responsibilities, experiences, and resources seemed to overlap with another *ad hoc* group that was formed by the administration. This committee argues for the persistence of IAG, and that its chair should report directly to the CDO.
- Three different offices (OIR, Global Engagement, and Human Resources) are responsible for dealing with international students, exchange students, and international faculty and staff. It would be beneficial to centralize the procedure of immigration-related paperwork in the hands of one person who has strong understanding of the procedures and has the capacity to advocate for non-citizen members of our community, who are particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged because of their status. This individual should report to the CDO.
- Therefore, we recommend that the following offices/committees report directly to the CDO in order to ensure effective coordination and support in fulfilling their missions: the OIR, FDRS, IAG, Title IX, and Disability Services.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): N

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

- Reorganize the College’s administrative structure to create reporting lines to the new CDO. By moving OIR and other related DEI-engaged offices into its own segment of the organizational chart, we simultaneously signal the seriousness with which we regard diversity, equity, and inclusion work at all levels of our institution, and we also ease existing tensions of conflicting oversight. As an example, if OIR can be recast as an advocacy body for all members of campus instead of (as it is currently perceived in some quarters of campus) part of a student vs. faculty divide, it can help develop relevant programs for retention and recruitment of faculty and staff and become a mediating body as we go through DEI-related growing pains.
- We recommend assembling a team of stakeholders in DEI work at the College to report to the CDO. While some members of that team (such as the Director of OIR) might report exclusively to the CDO, some members might divide their reporting. The head of OFD, for example, might be part of the CDO’s team, while also remaining in the Dean of Faculty’s reporting line.
- Make permanent the Intercultural Advisory Group, charged with the mission to provide counsel to the Chief Diversity Officer on matters of equity and inclusion. The makeup of IAG should include students, faculty, and staff of diverse identities, with varied expertise across the institution. The IAG chair should report directly to the CDO. We wish to acknowledge the work of the Intercultural Advisory Group in its invaluable monthly Community Caucuses, which allow community members to gather and raise their concerns regarding social justice issue occurring on and off campus. Further, the IAG works to create collective community accountability. This work must continue.
- In addition, create a dedicated full-time staff position whose primary responsibility is to deal with immigration-related matters and paperwork for international and exchange students, international faculty, and staff, as well as track and follow up on immigration applications and advocate for all non-citizen members of our community.

Rationale: The reporting structure should reflect the seriousness with which we approach DEI work on this campus, and to recognize that such work penetrates into all areas of the community—it doesn’t simply “live” in the student, faculty, or staff space. We wish to avoid making our new CDO a figurehead without authority and without an effective team.

Next Steps: Even before launch of an official search for the new CDO, the College needs to initiate this reorganization effort, in order to enhance the attractiveness of the position for highly-qualified potential candidates.

Hire a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) for the College

Problem: Currently we have various groups, constituencies, and individuals on campus who do work that would more traditionally fall within the purview of a Chief Diversity Officer. Some of these groups include the Office of Intercultural Relations (OIR), the Office of Faculty Development (OFD), the Title IX office, the Intercultural Advisory Group (IAG), Disability Services, and the Faculty Diversity Recruitment Subcommittee (FDRS). What we lack is institution-wide leadership at the highest administrative levels to help oversee, lead, and coordinate this work.

The time has come to invest in hiring a Chief Diversity Officer who can take up the responsibility of moving our institution forward on DEI issues, and who can sit at the head of reporting lines relating to DEI work. This person must have the authority and resources to do this work sustainably. Therefore, this person must hold a PhD, have faculty status, and hold the title of Vice President—reporting directly to the President. This person should be reported to by the Director of OIR, the chair of IAG, the director of OFD, the chair of FDRS, the Title IX officer, and possibly others (see the ideas in the [reorganization proposal](#) above).

Hiring a CDO would help the institution to become more anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive, and would allow for implementation of policies dedicated to breaking down systemic barriers and supporting the changing demographics of the institution.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional): Funding is needed to hire an outside search firm to conduct a national search for a Chief Diversity Officer, to offer a competitive salary and benefits for this senior leadership position, and to equip the Chief Diversity Officer with all the resources to have effective oversight, influence, and authority on DEI initiatives at the institution.

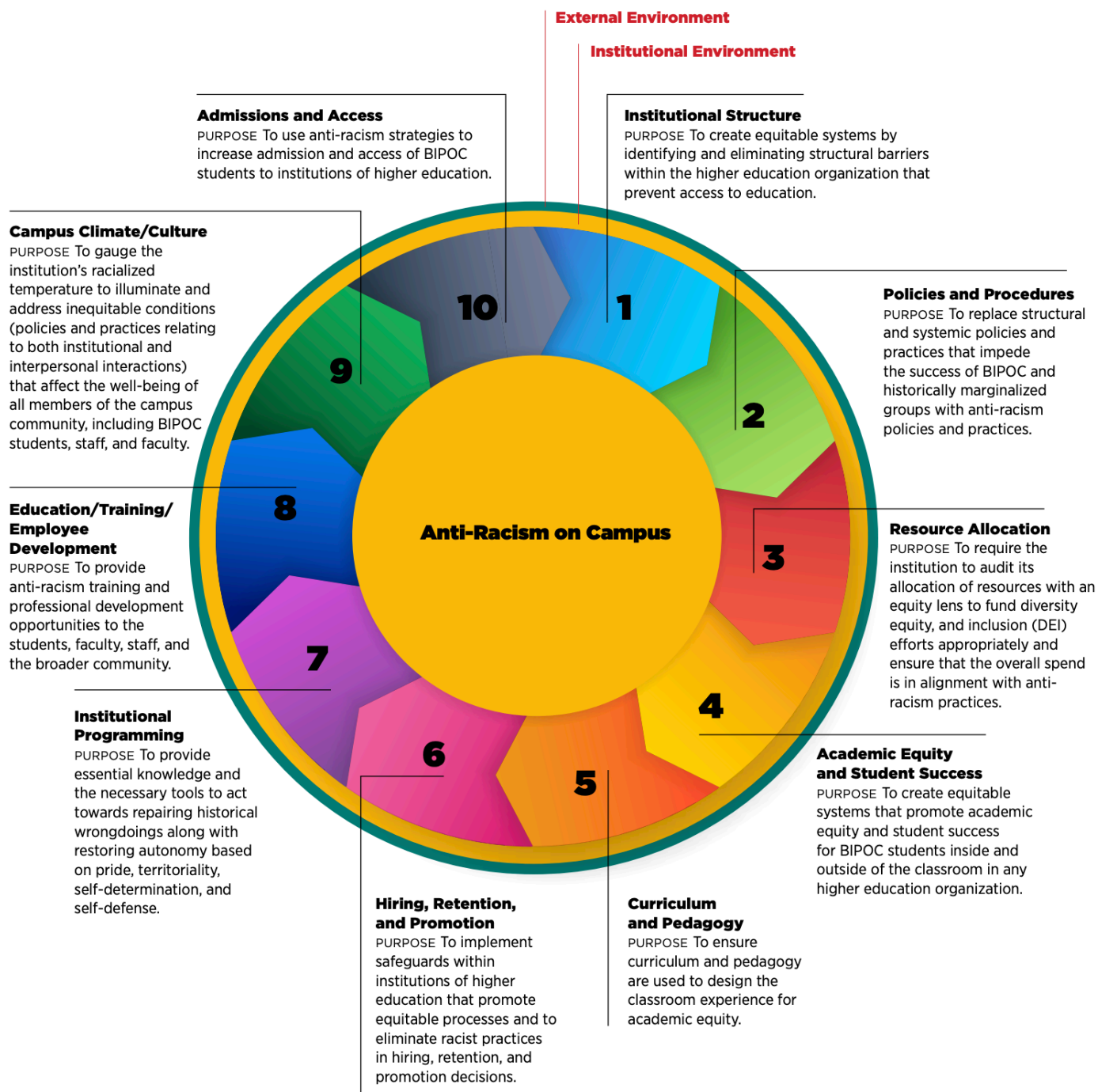
Project Proposal Details: Conduct a national search to hire a Chief Diversity Officer at the Vice President level, who will report directly to the President and be included in their most senior council of advisors.

Rationale: The Chief Diversity Officer, appointed at the senior leadership level, will have both the responsibility and the authority to implement systemic changes at the institution on diversity, equity, and inclusion that our current structures do not have the power to fully implement. The Chief Diversity Officer would be expected to follow the [National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education \(NADOHE\) Professional Standards](#).

Please click here to see the [NADOHE Report on Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus](#), to be implemented by the Chief Diversity Officer. For the Anti-Racism framework priority areas, see below.

Next Steps: Conduct a National Search for a Chief Diversity Officer utilizing a professional search firm that can help recruit and find the best possible qualified candidates. The Chief Diversity Officer must represent diverse and changing student, faculty, and staff demographics and help enhance the diversity at the senior leadership level. They must also have extensive experience and proven pedagogy that is rooted in antiracist, equitable, and inclusive practices.

NADOHE's Anti-Racism Framework addresses ten (10) priority areas where anti-racism strategies would significantly improve conditions for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students, faculty, and staff and that are applicable for a variety of college and university types. It should be noted that there is no prescribed order in which these priority areas should be addressed. It is important to take inventory of your community to determine initial focus and development of a plan to prioritize the needs of your organization.



Establish a Staff Governance Structure

Problem: Often the College prioritizes the wellbeing, retention, success and recruitment of students and faculty but not of staff. This focus on some members of the community but not all leaves staff—including administrative, custodial, and other essential staff—feeling less valued by the institution, even though they are an integral part of the community. This is exemplified by the fact that staff, as a group, have no voice in policy at the College: they cannot vote on policies that affect them, as faculty and students often can.

It is true that staff governance bodies are rare at institutions such as ours; therefore, this is a real opportunity for the College to break new ground and become more equitable and inclusive by developing staff governance.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Possibly; funds might be needed for legal counsel to help develop a staff governing body.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

Establish a consistent and sustainable way to allow staff to have a voice in institutional policy and reform. Faculty and students have this right, via faculty governance bodies and student government. We should consider developing a similar staff body—a Staff Policies and Personnel Committee, perhaps.

Rationale:

Staff members are more central than ever to the successful operation of Lake Forest College. As the number, variety, and importance of staff positions have grown, so has the need for their involvement in determining the direction and vision of the College. Ideally, a staff governance body would be positioned within the governance framework of the College, alongside similar bodies for faculty and students; all such bodies would be bound together by formal and legal authority guidelines.

Next Steps: We need to do research in order to determine the best strategy to introduce, develop, and sustain staff governance at the institution. One resource to consult is John W. Murray and Michael T. Miller, eds., [*Staff Governance and Institutional Policy Formation*](#), Educational Policy in the 21st Century: Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions (2011). Follow the link to see the table of contents.

Establish Periodic Audits of Institutional Policies, Practices, and Procedures

Problem: We do not currently conduct periodic audits of institutional policies, practices, and procedures; this limits our ability to identify and eradicate systemic bias that contributes to inequities on campus.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes. The College should consider hiring an outside firm to do a campus climate assessment of the institution; the recommended new CDO should lead efforts, based on the information gathered, to edit and improve policy.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

Policies, practices, and procedures should be continually assessed to ensure these affirmatively promote inclusion and equity. Doing so will improve institutional capacity for making data-driven decisions that influence campus climate. Questions to ask as we approach this task include:

- What data are we gathering now, and how is it disaggregated? How accessible is this data? What does the analysis tell us? How are we sharing the results with the campus?
- What does the data say about success rates for BIPOC students in developmental, remedial, and gateway courses into majors and specialized admissions programs? Is there an ongoing review and analysis of disaggregated course success data in all courses?
- Can we identify institutional policies, procedure, and practices that will eliminate systemic barriers? For example:
 - Has there been an examination of the institutional policies and practices that may create barriers to academic equity and student success? Does bias and/or systematic barriers exist in the following areas:
 - Academic departments/programs
 - Criteria for awarding financial aid, admissions, and scholarships
 - Housing and student life
 - Establishing and/or funding BIPOC student organizations

Potential areas/policies to assess and evaluate:

- Access issues (institution/educational type; intellectual, physical, social capabilities)
- Legacy admits/hires
- Affirmative action
- Equal employment opportunity
- Federal Government Title Programs: II, VI, VII, and IX
- Freedom of Speech/academic freedom issues
- Reclamation/renaming efforts
- Collective bargaining units
- Recruitment, onboarding, and retention
- Prison-to-pipeline programs
- Academic and employee disciplinary action
- Salary equity
- Tenure and promotion (faculty)
- Career advancement (staff)

- Financial aid and scholarships (students)
- Curricular and co-curricular programs and services
- Federal contracts
- Supplier diversity
- Auxiliary workers/services
- Town-gown relations
- Campus and community policing
- Communications and public relations (including social media, electronic communications)

Rationale: Higher education systems are complex webs of practices, policies, and procedures steeped in White normativity. Changing the system requires a disruption of business-as-usual, with an emphasis on eliminating bias and racism—and the first step is establishing where problems exist. Measuring progress toward justice requires the establishment of metrics of success with accountability mechanisms.

Next Steps:

- Be transparent and accountable in acknowledging and addressing the institution’s historical legacies and current practices of exclusion, while also acknowledging progress towards achieving equity.
- Take a multi-dimensional approach to improve the campus climate and sense of belonging for all members of the campus community.
- Implement inclusive recruitment strategies and admissions policies and practices to diversify the student body as well as staff and faculty groups, senior leadership, and board of trustees.
- Appropriately engage with external entities, including local, state, and federal governments, corporate and community partners, vendors, K-12 educational partners, etc., including those who actively demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Conduct audits of the institutional culture and climate regularly and use resulting data to review and revise policies and practices, in order to achieve equitable student outcomes and optimize faculty and staff work performance.
- Conduct a comprehensive archival review of the institution’s cultural history, to identify monuments, names/titles of buildings, scholarships, programs, etc. that commemorate polarizing historical figures.
- Review the institution’s mission statement, diversity statement, strategic plans, and other associated declarations to identify gaps and opportunities between the rhetoric and institutional realities.
- Consider restorative justice/truth and reconciliation approaches to address harmful past and present practices uncovered during the collection and review of institutional archival data.

Develop Clear and Consistent Bias and Discrimination Policies and Procedures

Problem: First, there is not a clear and comprehensive set of protocols and procedures at the College for cases of discrimination that take place on or off campus. We need a robust and transparent process for handling discrimination cases that rise above the level of the bias policy/process. This process for discrimination cases should work in tandem with the bias process when appropriate.

Second, we currently have two different bias processes that are not consistent. One (for students and staff) is both educational and consequential in nature, but when it comes to a claim of bias against faculty, the process is purely educational, with no real consequences for a faculty member. We need a process that is accessible, equitable, and just, and that can be a resource for all members of the community regardless of title or position.

Definitions:

- [Discrimination](#) and [harassment](#) violate federal law (Title VII and the ADA, among others). “Bias incident” is often used as an overarching term that overlaps with hate crimes, discrimination, and harassment. However, the bias process has a specific purview: focusing on incidents that are not covered by discrimination or harassment policies. It can be valuable for a college to make these distinctions clear on their website, [as Macalester does here](#).
- The College needs a clear discrimination policy and procedure, developed in accordance with the standards of the [US Department of Education](#), which outlines and defines different forms of discrimination:
 - [Race and National Origin Discrimination](#) (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
 - [Disability Discrimination](#) (Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act)
 - [Sex Discrimination](#) (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)
- What, then, is a bias incident, covered by the bias incident response process? An event rises to the level of a bias incident when speech, writing, or physical behavior is directed at an individual’s actual or perceived membership in a particular identity group and has impacted the individual’s safety, security, emotional and/or psychological well-being and lacks educational, and or artistic relevance. A bias incident can cause harm whether the behavior was intentional or unintentional.
 - Examples include homophobic or sexist jokes, racist or religious slurs, or saying the N word as a non-Black individual. A professor assigns a nickname to a student whose name they have difficulty pronouncing (when the student did not ask for a nickname). Bias incidents include incidents that are more difficult to define than harassment or discrimination, but that can nonetheless harm or threaten individuals or groups based on characteristics of identity.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): We recommend consultation with an outside law firm with expertise on discrimination, harassment, and freedom of speech cases, as well as in the development of bias and discrimination policies.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

Bias reporting and discrimination and harassment procedures should all be interconnected. Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work is rooted in legal precedents from the 1964 Civil Rights Act to

the present day. A robust compliance framework must be in place, which includes affirmative action reporting, mechanisms for reporting alleged violations of Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and mechanisms for bias incident reporting. The compliance function must be supplemented with policies and procedures to mitigate discrimination in all its forms.

Thus, we urge that the College develops a single bias incident response policy that is person-to-person and that is led by the recommended new Chief Diversity Officer, possibly in partnership with the Dean of Faculty, the Director of Human Resources, and the Office of Intercultural Relations. The CDO and other College entities should work to create a clear set of policies and guidelines that dictate how bias incidents shall be handled.

A new bias incident response process should incorporate a cycle of assessment that includes the [Council for the Advancement of Standards](#) for self-assessment (see part 12 [p. 14] at the link): benchmarking, external review, and reference to standards of professional practice for chief diversity officers. By engaging in this rigorous form of assessment, the process can clearly articulate its connection to the institutional learning objectives. Another resource to consult while developing a robust bias policy is the [Journal of Diversity in Higher Education](#), which contains models and frameworks on how to [respond to bias incidents](#).

Rationale (Discrimination Policy): State and federal laws protect against discrimination and harassment, and we need to have a clear and accessible policy for managing such incidents on our campus.

- The U.S. Department of Justice ([Title IX](#) federal civil rights law), the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (or ADA), and the [National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education](#) are clear about an institution's responsibility to comply with federal laws related to hate crimes and harassment.
- The [U.S. Department of Justice defines a hate crime](#) as “violence of intolerance and bigotry, intended to hurt and intimidate someone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.”
- Schools or colleges rank third among locations where hate crimes take place ([Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011](#)).

Rationale (Bias Response Process): A single person-to-person bias process would be better than the current situation because:

- It allows for education on the individual level (supporting and educating the individual victim and perpetrator) and the systemic level (creating programming, awareness campaigns, or policy change that stretch beyond the individual victim and perpetrator and impact an entire community at the institution in a nonpunitive manner).
- It allows the institution to build a better environment, at the individual and systemic levels. If one individual has a better experience, feels supported, and is retained on the institutional level, then the environment is better for that individual. On the systemic level, the bias incident response process is intended to make an impact and build a better environment for everyone who experience bias.
- It is proactive, rather than just reactive. Because the current bias incident response process was set up as a response to specific bias incidents at the institution, the process is inherently

reactive. However, building a better environment in which acts of bias do not recur makes aspects of the process proactive.

- It can draw attention to the need to change certain policies and to address elements of the campus climate.

Next Steps: Under the leadership of the recommended new Chief Diversity Officer, and possibly in partnership with the Office of Intercultural Relations, Human Resources, the Dean of Faculty, and legal counsel, develop a person-to-person bias process for the institution.

Work in conjunction with the Chief Diversity Officer and legal counsel to establish the relationship between the bias policy and the discrimination/harassment policy. Provide a clear protocol that is included in all campus handbooks. Ensure all bodies involved in the investigation process have been adequately trained and continue to get training on a yearly basis.

Develop a Crisis Response Policy

Problem: When bias incidents, hate crimes, acts of discrimination, or social justice movements that directly impact our community occur (whether on or off campus), the College often struggles to respond in a manner rooted in best practices and to provide the aid necessary to bring restorative justice and healing. By being reactive rather than proactive in such cases, we are perpetually behind the need for healing in our communities. We often hold some type of community forum, at which senior leadership (with no Chief Diversity Officer) is called upon to answer to the community, but students' voices are often the most powerful voices heard. We lack clear communication structures that inform community members about resources available to them. We have no protocol to assess our response process and improve it, based on best practices (see the [Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education](#), p. 14)

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes: funding is needed to respond to crisis needs, including more mental health services for all, safety escorting services, etc.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: We need to develop a robust protocol for immediate, short-term, and long-term responses to crises that is clearly outlined in all handbooks (student, staff, faculty). Having an accessible and transparent process available to all community members builds confidence in the institution and brings a level of comfort in knowing the steps the institution would take should we collectively experience trauma. Questions that need to be answered as we develop this policy are:

- What will be our communication to the community when incidents of crisis arise?
- How will we protect our most vulnerable and affected populations?
- How will we educate those who “don’t get” the impact an event had on some members of the community?
- How do we provide a space for feedback and open lines of communication, so that our community can openly and transparently express what they need in the way of policy revision? How do we stand in solidarity with those impacted in a meaningful and systemic ways rather than doing “performative justice”?
- How will we hold each other accountable as a community?
- How will we ensure that the healing process is effective and tailored to our different populations on campus (students, faculty, staff, alumni, etc.)?
- How do we ensure no further burden falls on the shoulders of survivors, the vulnerable, and marginalized population?
- What can the institution commit to do in the first 24 hours, the first week, the first month, the first semester, and the first year after a traumatic event?
- How will the institution commit funding to the necessary resources to care for its community? These could include: additional mental health staff, secure spaces, education for those who do not understand the trauma, investment in the wellbeing of the staff, faculty, and their families as they bring their expertise to help the campus heal.
- What will the role of senior leadership and the college president be in time of crisis?

Rationale: The urgency for developing processes and procedures to best support the community when instances of activism and crisis occur on campus or in the local community has been made more evident by the civil unrest that the nation experienced in 2020, but also by the student activism

at our institution in 2019, when many students believed the “senior administration” was not doing enough to protect marginalized populations. Consistent feedback we often receive from the community is that we must be more proactive instead of reactive, that we must work on solving issues before they cause further harm, and that we must be more transparent about the ways the institution, administrators, and staff will react in the case of a crisis.

Next Steps: The recommended new CDO should collaborate with the College President and Board of Trustees, as well as various crisis management experts and social justice educators on and off campus, to develop a robust crisis management plan for healing. Publish this plan in all handbooks (students, faculty, and staff). Consider NADOHE as a partner in developing best strategies as it relates to crisis management in equity and inclusion work. Specifically consider the strategies suggested in the [Advancing the Centrality and Capacity of DEI Work in the Context of Crisis Management webinar](#) presented by NADOHE.

Increase Institutional Financial Resources for DEI Efforts

Problem: We now fund many of our institutional DEI efforts from the small budgets of the Mojekwu Fund, the Office of Faculty Development, and the Office of Intercultural Relations.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

- Capital campaigns should include targeted efforts to engage BIPOC alumni in supporting students of color and other DEI initiatives. An effort to create alumni identity groups is an example of a good way to mobilize the giving efforts of a diverse alumni.
- Investments should be made in funding targeted financial aid and scholarships for BIPOC students, as financial barriers and burgeoning student debt are particular obstacles for BIPOC students. Capital campaigns and advancement work must include scholarship dollars dedicated to assisting BIPOC students in attending and graduating from college. “There has been a growing awareness within both academic and policy circles of the links between racial disparities in student loan debt and greater societal racial wealth inequality” (Morgan and Steinbaum, 2018; Steinbaum, 2019; McKay and Kingsbury 2019; Mishory, Huelsman, and Kahn 2019). Institutional financial support is needed to address these racial inequities (see the [ACE Report on Race and Ethnicity](#), 2020).

Project Proposal Details: The institution should audit its allocation of resources with an equity lens, and it should develop new fund-raising strategies, in order to fund diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts appropriately and to ensure that the overall spend is in alignment with anti-racism practices.

- **Provide appropriate funding to hire an appropriately qualified Chief Diversity Officer (see proposal above).**
- **Conduct a central audit of all institution-wide funding expenditures to support DEI efforts.** DEI is a value-added effort. Organizational budgets should be reviewed to determine the percentage of funding dedicated to DEI initiatives and the associated outcomes.
- **Allocate a pool of resources to support antiracism education and training.** Curriculum reform will need to be a funded mandate. As faculty work to revise the curriculum, their efforts should be compensated.
- **Fund and support programs that assist BIPOC students, faculty, and staff.** An investment in programs that promote diverse stakeholders’ retention and success is essential as we move to develop a thriving academic community that is working toward racial justice.
- **Equity pay analysis for employees of all designations.** Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits wage discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. However, absent pay equity studies, many BIPOC higher education staff and faculty salary ranges may be below their White peers: “Equal pay for equal work is not a reality for many people of color. When we control for education, years of experience, occupation and other compensable factors, most men and women of color still earn less than White men” (Equal PayScale, 2020). Attracting and retaining talented faculty and staff through fair compensation practices is critical to an anti-racism framework.

Rationale: As institutions move forward with anti-racism work, overall institutional DEI budget allocation is one metric of commitment. An institution's DEI strategy must come with appropriate budget resources and human capital. If justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion are part of institutional planning objectives, then strategic funds must be allocated to fulfill the goals outlined in the planning process.

In times of budget strain and the threat of declining enrollments, all too often DEI initiatives are first to be streamlined, as they are seen as cost centers and not revenue generators. This type of cost analysis is faulty. DEI cost-cutting sends a powerful message that BIPOC students, faculty, and staff are expendable. A comprehensive DEI program can lead to the retention and success of diverse communities, especially as we seek to increase the [diversity of our student body in various ways](#). Conversely, a poorly-funded DEI program can harm an institution, as students, faculty, and staff become vulnerable to racial injustice. In addition, DEI initiatives, programs, and staff can serve as a recruitment and retention tool and create a sense of belonging for BIPOC communities.

Next Steps: Conduct a major donation campaign and identify donors willing to contribute to the advancement of social justice efforts on campus. Seek the opportunity to endow a fund for diversity, equity, and inclusion programming initiatives. Consider the [NADOHE Framework for Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus](#) as guide of best practices for rationale and guidance for making Institutional Financial Resources for DEI Efforts a priority in an effort to move towards transformative change.

Explore HSI ([Hispanic-Serving Institution](#)) Status for Lake Forest College

Problem: First, Hispanic and Latinx students face systemic barriers to accessing a high-quality education. Only 40% of Latinx children participate in preschool education programs, as compared to 53% of their White peers. The high school graduation rate for Hispanic students is below the national average. Hispanic students are underrepresented in advanced courses in mathematics and science, and they can face language barriers in the classroom. Only 19% of Latinx adults have at least a bachelor's degree (compared with 1 in 3 overall), and just 6% have completed graduate or professional degree programs, versus 13% of the national population. In addition, barriers to equity in education can compound and intersect for Hispanic and Latinx students who identify as women, who are part of the LGBTQ+ community, who are English language learners, and who are individuals with disabilities.

Second, the College faces an enrollment crisis in the coming years. After the global economic crisis of 2008, the birthrate fell. While the economy has rebounded in the decade since, the birthrate has not. The nation's colleges and universities will be impacted by a rapid drop in college-aged individuals in the general population beginning in the mid-2020s. This looming enrollment cliff is being talked about in every department and office across campus. It is imperative that we have measures in place for the following:

- Demographic shifts in our prospective student populations starting in 2025.
- Institutional restructuring to meet the nuanced needs of this new student population.
- Investment in the economic and human capital needed to support our most vulnerable students.

Project Proposal Details: The College is in a unique position to respond to these two challenges by 1. broadening our institutional reach and serving an underserved population, while 2. responding to the aforementioned demographic shift. To do this, we propose the College set a course for establishing itself as a Hispanic Serving Institute (HSI).

An HSI is defined as an institution that has “an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application.” The current enrollment of Hispanic students (in 2020) at the College is 17.7%. [As of Fall 2018](#), there were 19 HSI's in Illinois—interestingly, that list does include our community college partners, but does not include our major competitor universities in the state: DePaul, Loyola, UIUC, and UIC. In 2018, only one college in each Indiana and Wisconsin was so designated. This suggests that there might be recruitment opportunities in the region tied with achieving this status. Furthermore, there are grants available from the government for institutions designated as HSI. The application process for such funding—once the enrollment level is achieved—is complex ([see here](#)), but could open many opportunities for all our students.

[First, the College must apply for a planning grant from the U.S Department of Education's Strengthening Institutions Program \(SIP\).](#) This will then allow us to [fund the construction of a competitive Programming Proposal under SIP](#). Funds from a SIP programming grant can be used to increase our capacity to meet the needs of marginalized populations through expansion of the Center for Academic Success; provide professional development for staff and faculty; and strengthen our endowment.

Rationale: The College will likely face declining or stagnant student enrollment rates beginning in about six years, a reality which will require a thoughtful, strategic approach to ensure the viability and sustainability of the College. Candidly, the College would be remiss if it did not seriously consider prioritizing the recruitment of Hispanic and Latinx students from both traditional and non-traditional backgrounds. Of all demographics the College currently serves, Hispanic and Latinx people remain the largest population under the age of 30. Proportionally, this population will be the least affected by these historic demographic shifts and thus will constitute the most robust market of prospective students.

Next Steps:

- Discuss with Admissions the challenges of achieving a 25% Hispanic student population.
- Convene a grant management team to begin this process by requesting the necessary waivers from the U.S Department of Education. This team will also survey the campus for resources available to the College to be levied in our bid to become a Hispanic-Serving Institution.
- Consider what resources we will need to invest to support Hispanic students if we seek to recruit more of them in order to become an HSI. We might consider: the need for bilingual admissions counselors; the nature of our marketing materials; the need to support mental health and student life for students at a PWI in a predominantly white community, and so on. We cannot simply seek to enroll more Latinx students without a plan to deliver an equitable experience to them once they arrive.

Make Lake Forest College a Sanctuary Campus for Undocumented Students and Community Members

Problem: Circumstances for undocumented students in higher education have drastically improved over the past decade, but there is still work to do. In particular, much of the support available is predicated on students having DACA status, leaving out other undocumented students. We believe that all undocumented students deserve to feel safe on campus, have secure food and lodging, and have support in their academic endeavors. We believe that access to higher education should be equitable regardless of citizenship status or economic background. Many of the proposed policies and programs in the resources below echo the demands of the “sanctuary campus movement,” which calls on colleges and universities to adopt policies specifically to protect undocumented people on campus. It is important to remember that a “sanctuary campus”—while a compelling concept—is not a recognized legal status, which is why it is essential not only to invoke that label, but also to create specific policies for our campus that can be implemented and enforced.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes, to do the following:

- Hiring specialist legal counsel with expertise in immigration law and knowledge of the resources and options available for undocumented students and DACA students.
- Funding initiatives to improve the experiences of our undocumented community members.
- Attorney fees to provide consultation to immigrant families to potentially explore a pathway toward citizenship.

Project Proposal Details: Being a sanctuary campus requires that protections be put into place that will ensure a safe environment for all students, reaffirm the right of access to education, and protect the rights of undocumented immigrants and other vulnerable populations. The Sanctuary School and Safe Zone Movement argues that schools and educational institutions do not have the legal authority or resources to engage in federal immigration enforcement and thus should not cooperate with federal agencies in their efforts to identify, detain, or deport undocumented immigrant students.

Some key components of being a sanctuary campus include:

- Limiting the sharing of student information with federal immigration authorities
- Restricting immigration agents' access to campus
- Prohibiting campus security from collaborating with federal immigration authorities for the purposes of enforcement
- Providing resources and information for immigrant students and their families

Resources to consult as we consider possible areas of institutional development and consideration to become a sanctuary campus:

- [Experiential and Funding Opportunities for Undocumented Students](#)
- [An avenue to Expand College Affordability, Access and Success for Undocumented Students](#)
- [Higher Ed Guide to Tuition, Financial Aid and Other Funding for Undocumented Students](#)
- [Higher Education Guide to Funding Opportunities for Undocumented Students](#)
- [FAQ for Campuses on Immigration Enforcement and Site Visits](#)
- [Alternative Income and Career Options for Undocumented Students](#)

- [FAQ: None-Employment Based Educational Funding Opportunities regardless of immigration status](#)
- [FAQ: Higher Education Access and Undocumented Students](#)
- [FAQ: Employment Practices Regarding DACA Beneficiaries](#) (for higher ed institutions)

Rationale: Sanctuary campuses benefit all students because they promote a safe and welcoming environment free of discrimination, in particular for those immigrants who are most vulnerable to enforcement actions in the current political climate (undocumented students, DACA students, families with mixed status households, Muslims, refugees, and other immigrant groups).

- Efforts to protect students and student data through the Sanctuary and Safe Schools Movement are built upon legal protections that are already in place, including FERPA and the U.S. Constitution.
- In [Plyler v. Doe](#), the Supreme Court recognized a constitutional right of access to K-12 education for all students, regardless of their immigration status. Actions taken by the school, locality, or state to chill this access to schools, including engaging in activities that increase absenteeism of students, may violate Plyler.
- [FERPA \(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act\)](#) requires schools to obtain written permission from parents or eligible students before releasing any information from a student’s education record, and it gives rise to liability if schools release students’ information without that permission.
- The Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits any state from denying “to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” Furthermore, the Fourteenth Amendment’s Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses shield all individuals from unfair and unjust treatment, regardless of race, sex, religion, or age.
- The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives all people the right to be free of unlawful searches, seizures, and warrantless arrests from law enforcement agents, and the U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted this right to apply to activities by immigration enforcement agents.
- The Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states that the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution are reserved to the States or to the people. Thus, the federal government cannot force states and localities to enforce federal immigration law.
- U.S. Immigrations & Customs Enforcement’s longstanding policy is to strongly discourage immigration enforcement actions—arrests, interviews, searches, and surveillance—from taking place in “sensitive locations,” including hospitals, churches, and schools.

Next Steps:

[Be part of the Sanctuary campus petition.](#)

[Resolution to Designate College/University Campuses as Safe Zones and to Create Resource Centers for Students and Families Threatened by Immigration Enforcement.](#)

Establish a Land Acknowledgement for the College and Engage with Local Indigenous Community

Problem: Lake Forest College is located on the traditional unceded lands of the of the Council of the Three Fires—the Potawatomi (Bodéwadmi/ Neshnabek), the Ojibwe, and the Odawa (collectively Anishinabe)—as well as in a traditional place for trade, gathering, and healing for more than a dozen Native nations, including the Illinois Confederacy (the Peoria and Kaskaskia Nations), but there is currently no acknowledgement of this on behalf of the College. This stands in contrast to other entities of higher education in the Chicagoland area (e.g., [Northwestern University](#)) and across the U.S. or Turtle Island. A Land Acknowledgement process must be understood as an integral part of our ongoing Campus DEI work.

Opportunity:

- Generate awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in the College community and recognize the legacy of settler colonialism in the area. Create yearly Indigenous People’s Day programming at Lake Forest College.
- Land acknowledgements are an expression of appreciation and gratitude to the Indigenous Peoples, for the use of their lands on which we work, study, and learn.
- Engage with the local Lake Forest community as they move to establish a land acknowledgement of their own.
- Develop a relationship with local Indigenous nations or organizations to build partnerships and support their work and communities.
- Recognize and support Indigenous campus members (on the basis of self-identification to respect
- Indigenous ways of reckoning kinship) and involve them in the Land Acknowledgement process as integral members.

Resources/Fundraising Needed: Yes

Project Proposal Details:

- Establish a formal Land Acknowledgement for Lake Forest College, to be used at the beginning of ceremonies, lectures, or public events, in addition to featuring a page on the College website. Current draft: We would like to acknowledge that the current *campus of Lake Forest College sits on the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires—the Potawatomi (Bodéwadmi/ Neshnabek), the Ojibwe, and the Odawa (collectively Anishinabe) as well as a traditional place for trade, gathering, and healing for more than a dozen Native nations including the Illinois Confederacy (the Peoria and Kaskaskia Nations). The Potawatomi villages of Mattawa and Aptakeesik were located by our campus until the 1830 Indian Removal Act and other land cessions forced many*

Potawatomi people out of the area. Other nations including the Myaamia, Wea, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Thakiwaki, Meskwaki, Kiikaapoi, and Mascouten peoples also call this region home, and one of the largest urban Native American communities in the US (or Turtle Island), resides in Chicago. Our institution is starting the work to reckon with our settler-colonization of the area and dismantle those legacies. We hope to offer scholarships to Indigenous students to recognize what we have collectively taken from them.

- Develop a detailed plan for community engagement (both with non-indigenous Lake Forest community members and with local indigenous activists and representatives).
- Email the faculty and staff mailing list, as well as the student list, to let the entire Lake Forest College community know about this work and make certain all relevant stakeholders are able to be part of this process.
- Create a yearly Indigenous People’s Day programming at Lake Forest College.
- Create a plan for “next steps” that go beyond gestures, to ensure that Lake Forest College is addressing the legacy of settler colonialism in the area. These next steps should draw upon peer reviewed literature on the subject (a list of sources is already underway). Some outcomes to consider:
 - Establishing a scholarship program for Indigenous students as part of this work to decolonize the land that the campus sits upon.
 - Connect this to a DEI statement and make sure that it goes through governance committees (e.g., CPC).
 - Observe Indigenous People’s Day 2022: have an event, invite our partners, and make this a day of work and relationship building.
 - Establish the percentage of students who self-identify as Native Americans or Indigenous in the College.
 - Consider in what ways Lake Forest College can disrupt the pattern of settler colonialism and/or address the privilege that non-indigenous people have on unceded Native territories.
 - Create a campus-wide education campaign on the subject to ensure all members of Lake Forest College are aware of and engaged with the topic, including creating a program for honoring Indigenous People’s Day at the College.
 - Engage with local activists and Indigenous community members, such as Dr. John Lowe and Starla Thompson, in addition to campus members such as the Native American/Indigenous Student Empowerment Group.

Rationale: As an institution of higher education dedicated to cementing its commitment to DEI initiatives that have an impact both locally and globally, it is imperative that Lake Forest College recognizes the legacy of settler colonialism that makes its existence a possibility. Land Acknowledgements are not just becoming more common among colleges and universities, they are a necessary first step to making their campuses more equitable for Indigenous peoples. Moreover, the larger community of Lake Forest has expressed an interest in developing a Land Acknowledgement, presenting an opportunity for faculty and staff with knowledge and interest in the subject to share their expertise with the community.

Part IV: Individual Projects

Section 2: Academic Access

Revise Key Academic Policies

Replace Course “F”s with “Not Pass” Grades; Extend the P/F Deadline; Eliminate WF Grades; Revise Registration Hold Policy

Problems:

1. F grades represent a “double punishment” (no credit, plus GPA hit) that particularly impacts those who are not experienced self-advocates. A “No Pass” grade would do the work we need (no credit, no progress to the next course) without punishing the student twice. Furthermore, course Fs currently disproportionately affect students of color, first-gen, and Pell-eligible students.
2. The current P/F deadline, at mid-term, comes before many students have a concrete sense of their performance in the course—in many cases, mid-term exams have not yet been returned, and there may be only one or two pieces of work that have been graded. Extending the P/F deadline later in the semester (as we did during COVID, and matching the W deadline) would allow students to make a more informed choice.
3. There are currently two W deadlines: an automatic W deadline at mid-term and a deadline on the last day of class, when the instructor has the discretion to award the W or WF. This can cause confusion, and it can discourage students from taking a needed W out of fear of a WF.
4. Students whose accounts are not fully paid are prohibited from registering for courses during the advising period, often meaning that by the time their hold is released, there are few if any appropriate courses for them to take. We recognize that the College relies on tuition and that bills need to be paid; nonetheless, we propose a different policy to ensure this while not jeopardizing students’ path to graduation.

Resources or Fundraising Needed (Y/N): N

Project Proposal Details: See below

Rationale: The Student Success Committee has already begun discussion on many of these issues. The points below incorporate points made in that committee as well as this committee’s additions.

Replace Course Fs with “Not Pass”: The Committee members described our current F grade have two facets: students do not earn a credit and their GPAs are adversely impacted. Members asked the question: What is the good work that F grades do for us? How are they useful? Faculty on the Committee find that Fs are often a punishment for disengagement from the course—which can be related to life circumstances that have nothing to do with the course—rather than an evaluation of their coursework. This is an equity issue and a student success issue.

- Students who are experienced self-advocates, who have parents helping them, or are in close communication with advisors can withdraw from classes in time to not suffer the “double punishment.” Those who are less supported or who may be suffering from psychological, familial, or other personal issues will find their academic records adversely impacted by not withdrawing from courses in time.
- Data analysis by Kyle Diep shows that course Fs in the last 5 years disproportionately affect students of color, first-gen college, and Pell-eligible students ([see Appendix 1](#)). Although the

College (particularly CAS) works hard to help these students succeed—and they do—to have an NP policy would make this job easier.

- International students cannot withdraw from more than one class a term without implications for their visa requirements. Having a NP grade rather than an F would offer international students the same flexibility afforded domestic students.
- Students who try one major, struggle, and then pivot to another have GPAs permanently impacted by this shift, making internships and other post graduate opportunities less available to them. A “NP” policy would also help our transfer students who can struggle as they transition to the College. Such a change should also reduce the number of students who must attend the College for extra semester(s) after they have completed graduation requirements just to recover from F grades early in their academic program.

The “No Pass” grade would still have consequences to the students’ academic records. “No Pass” will be on the transcript. Grade requirements within majors would still pertain. Probation/suspension and Deans List and Latin Honors requirements will have to be adjusted. And so on.

Extend P/F Deadline: The Student Success Committee members supported this proposal to encourage students to engage with their courses as long as possible without fear of negative implications to their GPAs. The earlier deadline may result in more end-of-term course withdrawals, which have long-term implications for graduation rates and student/family satisfaction with the College.

Eliminate the WF Grade: Currently, students have two different deadlines for course withdrawal—the earlier, automatic W deadline, and the later deadline, which carries the possibility of a WF grade. These two deadlines can be confusing. Further, while WF grades are extremely rare, they may contribute to student anxiety (especially among our first-year and transfer student populations) and they may result in students choosing not to take a necessary W, out of fear of a WF. Finally—similar to the argument regarding F grades above—this is a “double punishment” for a student: they do not receive credit and they receive the grade hit of an F in their GPA.

Revise the Registration Hold Policy: Students who have a registration hold for financial reasons should be allowed to hold a spot in a class in “R” status (i.e., advisor approval not possible, but a spot is reserved) during regular registration. Students who are unable to clear a registration hold are often our most vulnerable and lowest income students. In many cases, they also come from historically-underrepresented groups. When we prevent them from having an equal chance at registration with their classmates, we consign them to whatever classes they can get, often resulting in a poor fit between student and course and potentially slowing time to degree for a group that can least afford it. While the registration hold is being used as an incentive to ensure payment, it is not an equitable incentive. The same outcome could be achieved by allowing the students to hold a spot pending payment (the “reserved” status currently used for a course selected but not yet approved by an advisor) but not allowing their registration to shift to “current” until tuition payment is made. Most students do clear their holds before the start of the new semester.

Next steps: Support the Student Success Committee in bringing this to campus consideration via CPC (for the grade policies). For the registration hold policy, bring to the Dean/Provost, Business Office, and Registrar.

Make Course Materials Affordable and Costs Transparent

Problem: Course material costs are prohibitive for many of our students, whether for traditional textbooks or for online course platforms. In the case of online-only course platforms, credit cards are often required for purchase (which some students do not have), and options such as course reserves are not available. In the vast majority of cases, students at the College are not able to view course material costs in advance—this information would allow them to budget and plan accordingly.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Not necessarily, although a fund to provide stipends to students of limited economic means in order to purchase online course materials might be worth exploring, since those pose a particular burden to students without credit cards.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: The College could take a number of steps to make course materials more affordable, accessible, and transparent:

- Include a section in each course description that outlines course costs. For example: “Textbooks costing \$100-200 (used or new) are required for this course.” Or, “Books for this course are available for purchase, but can be accessed for free via Library reserves and electronic copies.” Or, “An online course platform costing \$150 is used for this course; a credit card will be needed for purchase.” We recognize that enshrining such detail in course descriptions (which require CPC approval to change) might be too cumbersome. There may be other, better means to disseminate this information—we are open to ideas.
- Require faculty to put syllabi (or course material information, at minimum) on Moodle at least one week before classes begin, so students can order books from less expensive options.
- Encourage faculty, departments, and programs to explore and adopt Open Educational Resources for their courses. Where that is not possible, ask the Library to purchase electronic copies of books (whenever possible) and ensure (whenever possible) that course materials are available on Library reserves.
- Continue to develop the new system (established 2021-2022) to help students without credit cards to purchase access to online course platforms.
- Ensure that students receiving financial aid understand how they can access help in buying their course materials.

Rationale: Access to course materials is essential for success at the College. We need to ensure that all our students are able to budget for and access course materials.

Next Steps: This will require work with CPC (on course descriptions), faculty, departments and programs, the Library, and the Business Office, and the Bookstore Committee. As work is already underway in this area from the Business Office and Bookstore Committee, it will be important to coordinate with them.

Ensure that Non-Classroom Academic Opportunities are Available to All Students

Problem: Many of the most valuable academic experiences for our students are not found inside the traditional classroom; these include summer research opportunities, internships, and study abroad. However, for students with limited economic resources, unpaid internships, study abroad, or low-paid research opportunities (especially if they have to spend money to live on campus) may be out of reach. Furthermore, some opportunities may be difficult to access for our international and undocumented students. Thus, some portion of our students find important learning experiences, which the College advertises as signature advantages of the small college experience, closed to them.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Explore the creation of the following:

- Grants to cover College room and board for summer term, as well as a small stipend, in order to allow more students from low-SES backgrounds to participate in summer research projects at the College.
- Are students from low-SES backgrounds really able to study abroad? Are students made aware of resources already available to them to make this work for them? Could small stipends/grants bring study abroad within reach for more students?
- Stipends to cover the costs of unpaid internships for students (e.g., transportation, food, etc.). Further, we should (when possible) cultivate the number of paid internships available. The recent development of paid on-campus internships is a positive development here, as they may be more available to international students, students with disabilities, low SES students, etc. [Work with CAC to continue their efforts in this field.](#)
- Cultivate internship opportunities with organizations willing to provide a pathway towards citizenship through visa sponsorship, for both international students and undocumented students.

Rationale: An institution seeking true equity and inclusivity—and advertising “Access” to opportunities—should strive to ensure that valuable educational opportunities are available to all students.

Next Steps: First, consult with various campus departments (CAC, GEO, etc.) to find out what efforts are already underway.

Second, ensure that students are aware of what help is already available in accessing these opportunities—could include website updates, emails, CAC events, orientation programming, etc.

Third, work with Development and Alumni Relations to raise money to create a fund that would provide small grants to cover the kinds of costs outlined above, which could put these opportunities out of reach.

Fourth, work with CAC to cultivate internship opportunities that could lead to visa sponsorship and paths to citizenship.

Professional Development for Universal Design in Teaching

Problem: Increasing numbers of students require learning accommodations within traditionally-designed courses, creating costs in both academic support and faculty time, and raising questions regarding the equity of the student experience.

Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Y

If Y, then Messaging (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Fund a series of workshops/professional development seminars in which faculty can learn principles of universal design, explore how to most effectively revise classroom pedagogy to reflect those principles, and implement changes. Create a pedagogical improvement fund to incentivize universal design.

Rationale: Universal design as a premise emerged from the world of architecture, which has as a goal to make all buildings ADA compliant by nature – in other words, it “aim[ed] to remove obstacles for someone to access the surrounding environment” (Dewi et al. 2019: 113). Pedagogical scholars picked up the question of how to remove obstacles for learners that exist in traditionally run classrooms, and in 2006, David Rose and Anne Meyer released *A Practical Reader in Universal Design for Learning*. Several research teams and universities have since entered the field of universal design.

Courses that employ principles of universal design are able to accommodate a variety of learners with less on-the-spot faculty labor, and they take advantage of technological developments. For example, a course in which audio versions of texts are available by default does not require reworking for a visually impaired or severely dyslexic student. Simple modifications to deadline and extension policies can scaffold time management skills for students with executive function disorders.

The more students who can be accommodated equitably within the existing framework of each course, the fewer will need bespoke arrangements. Faculty effort up front to re-work their courses according to universal design principles will be repaid with less *ad hoc* effort needed down the road. There will always be exceptions, and accommodations supported by Disability Services and the Center for Academic Success will always be necessary. However, we can work to minimize such cases and simultaneously advance the equity of our classrooms.

Next steps: Look into sources for such training—resources, consultants, etc. Consult with the director of the Office of Faculty Development to discuss how to implement this training.

Works Cited

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Ensure Equity of Access to Campus Spaces

Problem: Many spaces on campus do not provide adequate access to all students, some because spaces are perceived as “unsafe”. Others because they are literally inaccessible to anyone with mobility or related issues (e.g., Carnegie, most residence hall lounges). We can make good on our “Access” admissions campaign by making a commitment to physical access—in the broadest sense of that term—to all spaces for all students.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Y
If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Collect data on the accessibility (broadly defined) of all campus spaces, identify impediments to access, then invest in whatever will make spaces more accessible. This will include physical measures: restructuring, ramps, elevators, lighting. This will also include studying accessibility from a broader perspective—where do different campus populations feel welcome/unwelcome, and why? How can we make all campus spaces safer and more accessible for all? How do different racial/ethnic and other historically marginalized groups experience campus? Holly Swyers has begun this work with students in her Qualitative Methods course (SOAN 320) in 2019—see [Appendix 2](#). She will begin a new round of data collection on the topic, funded by an ACM grant, in the spring of 2022.

Rationale:

As Harwood et al. (2018) point out, “students of color tend not to experience the same campus that white students experience” (2). They identify that at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), diversity does not result in inclusion, and many campus spaces are either fortified (read: White people deliberately intimidate BIPOC students), contradictory (potentially sites of microaggression, or counter (designated safe-spaces for recovering from racial battle-fatigue) (ibid.: 6). As long as students (and faculty and staff) feel unwelcome on campus, we will struggle with retention. While Harwood et al. focus on racial/ethnic minorities at PWIs, many students experience campus spaces as exclusionary or unwelcoming. For LGBTQ+ students, campus can be experienced as THIs (traditional hetero-gendered institutions) (Preston & Hoffman 2015), with LGBTQ+ spaces more focused on mental health and suicide prevention than on inclusion (ibid.).

While racism and homophobia often manifest as microaggressions, ableism produces even more issues with literal lack of access to spaces for mobility impaired students and potentially inaccessible course material for visually- or hearing-impaired students. For neurodivergent students, there is an uneven understanding of what kinds of support enable success. Spaces already experienced as disorienting for neurotypical students often even more difficult for students who struggle with processing disorders (Walton and McMullin 2021: 83). “Out of student enrolled in any postsecondary program, 38% of students with disabilities had graduated or completed their program in comparison with 51% of similar age peers in the general education” (Long and Stabler 2021: 1-2). We need to do a complete inventory of our spaces with attention to ways in which they are unwelcoming to students from historically marginalized groups.

Next Steps:

We have already secured a Mellon grant through the ACM to do a “Mapping Diversity Project.” The intended products and outcomes of project activities are multi-layered.

- On a professional development level, the products will be a new set of tools for gathering data about our campuses, a cohort of faculty and staff who have a new or deepened experience with grounded theory/content analysis, and a strengthening of alliances across curricular and co-curricular work toward the goal of improved campus climates of diversity and inclusion.
- On a campus improvement level, the results of the data collection and analysis will be put together as a report to relevant bodies on each campus. Our hope is that the reports will help identify areas for intervention (if needed) and areas of success (to celebrate and replicate).
- On an ACM level, we propose to develop a how-to manual for both the data collection and data analysis phases of the project that can be shared with all our member campuses. We also anticipate that there may be elements of how this project unfolds on each of our campuses that are worth sharing at various disciplinary and higher education conferences.

The question is what will come of this project? The data from this project needs to inform any capital improvements on campus, and it opens opportunities for us to address any spaces that are especially unwelcoming to any subset of our students, faculty or staff.

WORKS CITED:

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- Walton, Kerry R. and Rachel McMullin. 2021. Welcoming Autistic Students to Academic Libraries through Innovative Space Utilization. *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice* 9(2): 85-100.

Equitable Access to Parking

Problem: Our growing commuter population finds limits to their ability to park. Students brought to this committee their frustration with the current parking situation.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Longer term, for building new parking lots, yes.
If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Collect data on parking needs and availability. Plan for further parking lots/structures—as the commuter population increases, the need for parking will do so as well. Keep in mind the need for expanded parking for those with mobility and health issues.

The issue of “access” also includes access to student parking. We have a significant (and likely growing) population of commuter students, but not enough parking for them. Students pay for a parking permit but often find parking unavailable.

As a student pointed out in an email to the committee, this is an equity issue, as a student of high economic means might simply be able to park illegally and absorb the fine incurred, while a student without those means might have to be late to class, or park off campus. If the campus is going to sell parking permits to students, then adequate parking must be available. Options should be explored, including: encouraging faculty and staff to park elsewhere; use of all available lots; incentives for non-car commuting when possible, and so on.

Next Steps: Consult with Lori Sundberg and Dave Siebert about current plans to address parking issues. Advocate for more student parking for commuters.

Part IV: Individual Projects

Section 3: Student Support

Expansion of the Center for Academic Success

Problem: As the College recruits a more diverse student body, students will arrive with differing academic preparation and therefore different academic support needs. Many students have the capacity to do well but without the high school experience in math and natural sciences that will allow them to succeed in some of our more popular programs (often identified by placement exams). Some could be brought rapidly up to speed by faculty trained in rapid remediation and differentiated learning. Other students could—with appropriate guidance—realize earlier that they do not have the passion for a given program and find other interests, enabling us to decrease time to degree and improve retention. Furthermore, the number of students arriving at the College with diagnosed learning differences and mental and physical health issues that affect their academics is increasing. The Center for Academic Success is significantly understaffed to respond to these growing needs.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional): Would it be possible to find a donor who would like to have their name on the Center? Might it be possible to have endowed, named staff positions, as we do for certain faculty lines? We can build upon our status as a top school for social mobility.

Project Proposal Details: The Center for Academic Success currently consists of the following staff: the director, who currently also serves as the Director of Writing Programs; the Writing Center Director; the QRC Director; the Director of Disability Services; an Academic Success Specialist; and an administrative coordinator. These staff work valiantly to provide our students with support and resources, but the workload is simply too large. We recommend the hiring of two new full-time positions:

- An Associate Director of Disability Services
- An Academic Support Specialist for science (in process)

Further, we recommend that additional hires be made (one or two, depending on candidate expertise, as we recognize that a single individual could have both skill sets) so that the following expertise is represented among Center staff:

- An Academic Support Specialist whose expertise is in the first-generation college experience
- An Academic Support Specialist whose expertise is in the experience of ELL students—preferably, this person would be bilingual or fluent in Spanish.

Further, we propose consideration of the idea of a “Bridge Faculty”: add 3-4 full-time lines to the Center for Academic Success in a new hybrid faculty/academic capacity. Each faculty member would teach half-time, while spending the balance of their time providing academic support counseling to students and/or professional development and curricular support to faculty, depending on their expertise. Example: Disability specialist with differentiated learning expertise who can teach courses built around weaknesses identified in student’s placement scores.

Further, please see the [Health and Wellness Center project proposal](#) (fourth proposal therein) for ideas regarding an ADHD testing expert and a staff support person to handle paperwork. Such individuals might be housed either under CAS or the Health and Wellness Center.

Finally, we recommend (1) the conduct of a survey to highlight locations on campus where access is unnecessarily limited or totally impeded for those with physical health issues, and then (2) identified issues are addressed and corrected. ([See campus spaces access proposal above.](#))

Rationale: The increasing number of students at the College warranting/requiring academic accommodation means that a one-person Disability Services office is simply unsustainable. The number of accommodation plans written each year has gone up roughly 50% over the last four years. Furthermore, we recommend reviewing whether Disability Services should have its own budget in recognition of the growing complexity of providing adequate support to students with disabilities.

The other positions would serve other changing needs of our student population: the strong interest in science and the health professions, as well as the increasing number of first-generation and ELL students on our campus. Having these specialists on our campus would both help our students succeed and relieve the workload of faculty who are not adequately trained to provide specialized academic support in these fields.

Next Steps: In consultation with the director of the Center for Academic Success and the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, begin to develop a fundraising strategy.

Expand Counseling Services to Support Mental Health at the College

Problem: There has been a marked increase in students needing mental health services. This results in over-worked existing staff—who work valiantly to do all they can to help students—waitlists for frustrated students, and spillover of the consequences for unsupported mental health challenges onto untrained staff and faculty. This proposal should be understood as inextricably linked to the proposal to expand the [Center for Academic Success](#).

Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Y

If Y, then Messaging: Make it here—Make it resilient

Project Proposal Details:

- Add a full-time psychiatrist. A campus psychiatrist is helpful for both students who need to develop an appropriate therapeutic medication strategy (notoriously complicated for newly diagnosed mental illness) and for students who need assessments of learning disabilities. A psychiatrist is also needed because international students (among others) often find it difficult to find a psychiatrist in the community, and the waitlist is significantly higher.
- Add 1-2 additional full-time therapists. Possible expertise areas could include: preventative mental health care; experience in identifying structures and issues that routinely affect mental health in higher education, who can help develop strategies to fix problems and/or address them when they arise. It is also a strong priority to hire new therapists from different identity groups than those already represented at the College, including racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Increase funding for the doctoral internship program, which currently faces recruitment and equity challenges because the stipend is considerably lower than other internship sites.
- Add an ADHD testing expert (might be housed under Disability Services) and a support staff member (again, could be in Disability Services) who can handle accommodations paperwork, which is currently handled by HWC staff, limiting their abilities to focus on primary clinical duties.

Rationale: The de-stigmatization of mental illness has had a positive effect on many people, but it means that more students are asking for mental health support and overtaxing our existing mental health services. This is an opportunity for us to make a mark as a college that teaches good mental health hygiene and that gives students (and faculty and staff) the capacities to overcome mental health crises.

Next Steps: Fundraising for these positions. As with the [Center for Academic Success](#), might a named health center, or a named mental health center, be appealing to donors? We have raised money for resiliency before, so it seems there is at least some interest around these issues.

Student Advocacy Coordinator (or College Ombudsperson)

Problem: Students who experience violence or significant hardship during their time at Lake Forest College do not have a clear path to communicate their needs and acquiring confidential support and assistance. Further, the [Equity Internship](#) that began in 2021-2022 does not have an official home on campus and will require a supervisor.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Y

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Create a new staff position of Student Advocacy Coordinator (or College ombudsperson), reporting to the recommended new Chief Diversity Officer, to serve in two roles:

- As an advocate for students experiencing significant hardship (ex: going through the Title IX process or bias process, experiencing violence, housing displacement, family estrangement, death of a loved one, etc.). The duties of an Advocate or ombudsperson would include response, referral, advocacy, accompaniment, and reporting. An Advocate or ombudsperson would serve a key role in supporting students' success at the college through these duties and maintaining communication with any faculty or staff as required or requested by the student.
- As Director of the proposed [Student Equity Program](#), with responsibility for supervising and advising Equity Interns and Equity Ambassadors as they complete the requirements of their respective programs. This would require the Advocacy Coordinator to communicate with a variety of offices across campus and with faculty advisors.

Rationale: Students are in need of a campus advocate to perform the duties of response, referral, advocate, accompaniment, and reporting when students are in need or are facing significant hardship. Some students can find personal advocates in faculty or staff members they form relationships with, but these individuals may not always be able or equipped to assist students with their needs—and such individuals are not always allowed to provide confidentiality in helping students. Additionally, students who do not form these relationships are left struggling to identify who can help them.

The Equity Internship that began in 2021-2022 will need an on-site supervisor, and were it to expand into the proposed [Student Equity Program](#), then the program would require a coordinator.

Next Steps: Consider the ways in which this position will fit within the new CDO's team. Begin work to fundraise for this position.

Supporting Spiritual and Religious Life on Campus

Problem: There is a lack of formal support for students' spiritual life on our campus. We should work to develop an Interfaith Center, with resources for supporting students' religious lives and addressing their spiritual questions, concerns, and aspirations.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

- This is a DEI initiative; an international relations and intercultural initiative; a mental health initiative; an admissions recruitment opportunity.

Project Proposal Details: Lake Forest College is a secular educational institution, and that is a good thing. Our lack of religious affiliation permits each of us considerable freedom in what we think and believe. However, Lake Forest College is also committed to being a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community. Any educational community that does not provide professionally coordinated and sufficiently visible religious and spiritual resources for students to take advantage of if they so choose is, even if inadvertently, marginalizing the religious and spiritual identities of some of its members. Currently, we address spiritual and religious life largely by providing a website listing of off-campus institutions. There is also a smattering of student religious clubs or groups, which wax or wane from year to year due to the vicissitudes of student leadership. These modest measures are insufficient for students' needs at this unique time in the College's history. This proposal argues for addressing those aspirations by the formation of an Interfaith Center, offering dedicated space, staff, and resources for education in faith and spirituality, dialogue between members of diverse identities, and counseling within a framework of spiritual concerns. It also offers suggestions for shorter-term improvements we can make to the College's resources for religious observers.

Rationale: There are many reasons—some idealistic, some pragmatic—for Lake Forest College to develop a supportive and inclusive approach to students' religious and spiritual lives beyond the classroom.

If our mission statement asserts that “we embrace cultural diversity,” it is our responsibility to embrace the diverse religious/spiritual identities students bring to campus and nurture and support them. For some students, religious/spiritual identity is their primary identity. For other students, religious/spiritual identity is one important identity that they are struggling to reconcile with other aspects of their identity. Helping students navigate this powerful form of identity may play a crucial role in students' self-formation and discovery within a culturally diverse world.

Addressing students' spiritual concerns and questions and providing them with opportunities for religious community is also a mental health imperative, crucially related to the crisis of mental health among young people. Attending to students' spiritual lives should be a key facet of the support provided by any educational institution fully committed to student well-being.

Of course, while religion can serve great good, it has also been a persistent source of conflict in the world. In that regard, providing meaningful and sustained opportunities for students to interact with and learn about community members of other faiths—or even about different traditions within their own faith—can contribute to the long-term, ongoing work of intercultural peacemaking.

On a more pragmatic note, the religious and spiritual resources we do or don't offer may be a factor in the decision-making of prospective students and their families, even if not explicitly acknowledged. In that regard, providing the resources of an Interfaith Center serves also as an admissions opportunity insofar as it would enhance our claims that we care about each student as a "whole person," not just as an intellect or a body. All of the ACM peer institutions with which we would like to compare ourselves ([Grinnell](#), [Carleton](#), [Colorado](#), [Macalester](#), [Knox](#), [St. Olaf](#), [Lawrence](#)) offer significant extracurricular resources to support students' religious lives and spiritual interests; this is true even of those peer institutions that are no longer religiously affiliated. The major universities with which we compete for prospective students—Loyola and DePaul—are religiously affiliated institutions, with rich religious resources for students of faith, whether the Catholic faith each institution is affiliated with or the other faiths to which they offer hospitality. We do not want to lose any competitive edge we might have in relation to those institutions, and this is an area in which we are weak and they are strong.

Finally, this proposal recognizes religion's importance as a matter of diversity, equity, and inclusion and cultural concern. Yet, while religion has profound cultural expressions and ramifications, it is also much more than culture. The Office of Intercultural Relations staff are not specifically trained for interfaith work and spiritual counseling; therefore, we need dedicated space, staff, and resources for this significant undertaking.

Next Steps:

Long term

- Seek support from the President and the Board of Trustees for a new Interfaith Center, with a dedicated space, professional staff, and programming resources.
- Meet with Development and Alumni Relations to discuss development opportunities for an Interfaith Center.

Short term

Until funding is achieved to establish an Interfaith Center, the College should consider the following:

- Acknowledge religious holidays when they are occurring, providing the community with information about resources for supporting their observances. Consider a new "quiet days" policy for major religious holidays—while classes will be offered (with students excused for observance, as we do now), College-wide events will not take place and committees will not meet. Further, have the major religious holidays more visible on the campus calendar(s) to avoid unintentional errors in scheduling.
- Ask departments/programs to avoid scheduling required courses that are only offered in one section on Friday afternoons (especially in the I slot or G/I slot), to avoid scheduling conflicts for observant Jewish and Muslim students.
- Recognize religious or spiritual identity groups on campus as valuable forms of empowerment.
- In training faculty and staff, explicitly educate our new hires to recognize and display sensitivity to the cultural (and intercultural) importance of religion and spirituality and its role in the lives of our community members, whether students, faculty, or staff.
- Work toward devoting time and resources to the cultural understanding of diverse religions and to inter-religious dialogue, as a way of overcoming alienation and building bridges between separate individuals and groups.

Evaluate and Expand the Forester First Program

Problem: The impact of the Forester First program—which provided essential support for first-generation students at Lake Forest College for years—has not been evaluated in recent years, and the program has fallen into disuse for the last two academic years. This points to two separate but interrelated problems: first, the specific needs of first-generation students are not being met. Second, the program structure is out of date regarding best practices for supporting first-generation students and should be updated to take into account the impact of the COVID pandemic. A reconsideration and re-start of the program would provide the College with the opportunity to provide critical support for current first-generation students and to attract talented first-generation applicants to incoming cohorts. The goal is to develop a program that is sustainable in the long-run and that can adapt to a changing world to ensure continued existence of program in the future.

Resources/Fundraising Needed: Yes
If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

- Evaluate which aspects of the Forester First program best supported first generation students at the College in the past. Look specifically at the 8 pillars of the current Forester First program to consider any necessary updates. Review the feasibility of the previous structure, with the goal of making it more sustainable.
- Revise the guidelines for participation in Forester First program, in order to ensure that it is accessible to students who need support. For example, international students whose parents attended college outside the US may benefit from participation in the program.
- Update the program to reflect both the specific needs of Lake Forest’s first-generation students and best practices for supporting first-generation students (using data and publications from, among others, the [NASPA Center for First-Generation Student Success](#)).

Rationale: First-generation students continue to face unique challenges in higher education; Lake Forest College is no exception. As an institution with a comparatively large percentage of students who identify as first-generation, it is imperative that the College provide them with a robust support system to ensure their success both as students and beyond graduation. An evaluation of the Forester First program will accomplish this while also re-vamping the program to be more manageable for current staffing and to take into account the impact of recent global events (COVID, for example).

Next Steps:

- Gather data about past Forester First programs and develop a report that assesses the program from the standpoint of students who participated, staff that were associated with the program, and staff knowledgeable of statistical data regarding first-generation students at Lake Forest College.
- Develop an updated Forester First program, using this information, along with national guidelines for best practices for supporting first-generation students.
- Ensure the sustainability of the program by clearly defining expectations and stakeholders across campus.

- Develop a strategy to publicize the existence of our new program—as well as the wider support for first-generation students offered at the College—to prospective students and parents. Work to fundraise to support the program, perhaps among first-generation alumni.

Part IV: Individual Projects

Section 4: Recruit, Retain, and Support Faculty and Staff

Recruiting and Retaining Faculty and Staff from Historically-Underrepresented Groups

Problem: The challenge is two-fold: first, to continue to diversify our faculty and staff, by hiring more people from historically-underrepresented groups; and second, to ensure that once we hire these faculty and staff members, we strive to make their experience truly inclusive and equitable.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional): Some suggestions below would require no fundraising, but rather policy and culture changes. We also outline individual suggestions that require funding below.

Project Proposal Details: We need a comprehensive review of policies, procedure, and processes around recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion for faculty and staff. Specific suggestions include:

Recruitment Efforts: Both Faculty and Staff

- Prioritize recruiting and hiring Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) staff to professional and administrative positions, and faculty to tenure-track positions.
 - Recruit at academic and professional conferences, professional meetings, [The Placement Exchange](#) (TPE), the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators ([NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education](#)), etc. Recruitment and marketing efforts come with a cost (the TPE, for example, has recently been virtual and low cost, but was previously prohibitive). Recruitment expenditures include nontraditional marketing venues, outreach, pipeline activities, and developing anti-racism marketing materials.
- Continue to support and expand the work of the Faculty Diversity Recruitment Subcommittee (FDRS). Develop an equivalent body for staff—a Staff Diversity Recruitment Subcommittee (SDRS).
- Require professional development training for all staff and faculty members of groups overseeing searches. Further, all hiring bodies must have access to the toolkits needed to effectively implement the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of faculty, staff, and students. The College should establish procedures that hold search and promotion committees and departments accountable for their procedures and their outcomes.
- Provide all hiring committees with training on how to develop inclusive and equitable job descriptions.
 - Increase awareness of, and eliminate, racially-coded and exclusionary language.
 - Ensure that job descriptions highlight institutional commitment to racial equity and DEI efforts, which are more likely to yield candidates from underrepresented populations.
 - Require a statement from all job candidates about their demonstrated commitment to DEI.
 - Collaborate with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) to create a joint ACM job board for all member institutions.
- Orientation and onboarding activities should include DEI expectations and resources.

Retention and Persistence Efforts: Staff

Questions to consider for staff retention and persistence:

- What efforts have been established to ensure that DEI values are embedded in the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of staff?
- How do we collect data to track, promote, monitor, and report on the diverse, equitable, and inclusive recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Black and underrepresented staff?
- Does the institution have an effective communication strategy that reflects equity, diversity, and inclusion?

Efforts to pursue:

- Review standards for promotion: research shows that often BIPOC staff are overworked, undervalued, and critiqued more harshly than their White peers. The staff handbook and initiatives to support staff success and mentoring are critical in retaining diverse staff.
- Make benefits and policies more consistent for faculty and staff. The preferential treatment and benefits that faculty receive over staff creates a demoralizing experience for staff.

Examples of disparities in benefits include:

- Housing benefits: faculty have access to housing for at least 6 years; the staff housing benefit expires after 4 years, and housing in general is not prioritized for staff.
- Tuition benefits: faculty can access this benefit within 1 year of employment at the College; administrative staff must wait 3 years prior to receiving this benefit. Meanwhile, this benefit is not available for other essential staff workers: the night shift crews, the custodial and maintenance staff, the dining services staff, or the lower-wage staff (who make up the most diverse group of our employees).
 - The College should consider providing tuition benefits for all full-time Parkhurst and Aramark (custodial, groundskeeping, and maintenance) staff, to promote educational advancement and socio-economic mobility. Tuition benefits could provide these staff and their families with access to higher education and help them advance both professional and personally. It would demonstrate our commitment to equity and inclusion for all of our community members.
- Immigration sponsorship opportunities exist for faculty but not for staff
- Conduct a comprehensive Staff Handbook and Policy Review. [See also the Staff Governance proposal.](#)

Retention and Persistence Efforts: Faculty

- Faculty from underrepresented groups do much invisible labor, including: the work of integrating homogenous spaces; extra advising labor for students who share their identities; high demand for service due to the desire to include their perspectives and expertise. The College should establish mechanisms—ranging from compensation to more accurate ways of counting service—to recognize and reward this labor and improve retention. [For data on retention of faculty, see Appendix 3.](#)
- There is also evidence that faculty doing research investigating issues affecting historically-underrepresented groups have a more difficult time placing research in journals; that specialist journals focused on historically-underrepresented groups are often regarded as “not high impact;” and that collaborative, decolonizing research with historically-marginalized groups often is designed to be given back to communities, rather than focused

on scholarly journals. All three of these scenarios potentially undermine faculty members' tenure bids. We need to ensure our standards of "rigor" in scholarship are founded on premises that are transparent and inclusive.

- Junior faculty from underrepresented groups may need more space for acclimation, especially in their earliest years at the College. The ACM/Mellon diverse faculty fellowship appointments were designed in response to this reality. In what ways (fundraising, grant-writing, College resource allocation) can we try to replicate elements of that ACM/Mellon experience for our new faculty? The College could, for example, explore the establishment of endowed chairs aimed at junior faculty from historically-underrepresented groups (like the Beerly chair or the Montgomery chair, these could be discipline-agnostic, but seek to support particular faculty with support such as course releases while junior).
- When faculty (and staff and students) from underrepresented groups report incidents of bias or point out systemic issues, listen to them and act to respond.
- Create a transparent and streamlined process of immigration sponsorship for international faculty (and staff). Adopt a provision about immigration sponsorship policy in Faculty Handbook (see. [St. Olaf College](#) handbook, the [Colorado College](#) handbook [pp. 15-16], the [Middlebury College](#) handbook, and the [UIC handbook](#)) and Staff Handbook in order to ensure that immigration applications are prepared, filed, and made progress on equally for all international faculty and staff within the limits of the federal laws. Notably, in the examples linked above, all visas (faculty, staff, students) are handled by a centralized person/office, often in the Office of Intercultural Relations (or its equivalent).

Retention and Persistence Efforts: Both Faculty and Staff

- Fund the monthly Staff and Faculty BIPOC Lunch, as an opportunity for BIPOC staff and faculty to build community and support. This is also an opportunity to promote job postings at the College. Establish a once-per-semester meeting with the CDO to share feedback from this group.
- Create and fund a Staff and Faculty BIPOC Mentor Program that connects new BIPOC faculty and staff members with more senior BIPOC colleagues.
- Ensure regular campus-wide assessment of the BIPOC Faculty and Staff experience in order to help improve retention and recruitment efforts. More on this in the [Campus Climate Survey Proposal](#). Here is an example of thinking on promoting workplace equity from the [Harvard Business Review](#).
- Expand the goals of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Summit as an opportunity to build community and celebrate achievements and spotlight our BIPOC faculty and staff.
- Organize and institute DEI training for all faculty chairs and staff administrators. See more below in the [Ongoing DEI Training](#) proposal.
- Work to ensure that shared governance bodies (faculty, staff, student) are diverse.
- Develop a BIPOC staff/faculty exit interview and use data gathered to keep track of the rate at which BIPOC staff/faculty leave the institution and why, to help inform and improve our retention efforts from year to year
- Keep accurate records of all BIPOC Faculty and Staff for targeted programming.
- Develop career pipeline programs to provide ladders of career opportunities.

Next Steps: All initiatives impacting the recruitment and retention of historically-marginalized faculty and staff should be overseen by the Chief Diversity Officer and have the full support of the

Board of Trustees and College President. We should conduct a comprehensive Faculty and Staff Handbook and Policy Review to ensure equitable and consistent treatment of all faculty and staff. Consider partnering with NADOHE for ongoing best practices in the retention and recruitment of faculty and staff. Some resources to consider include:

- [Recruiting Diverse and Underrepresented Faculty and Senior Administrative Leaders: Best Practices and Strategies](#)
- [Retention Strategies for Diverse and Underrepresented Faculty](#)
- [Evidence Based Strategies for Recruiting a Diverse Faculty](#)
 - [Evaluation of the search process](#)
- [Equity Minded Faculty Workloads: What we can and should do now](#)

Equitable and Transparent Evaluation and Compensation of Faculty

Problem: There is both perceived and real inequity in workload amongst faculty. There is concern that the College is not fully evaluating the work we actually do, nor doing so in the most effective way (i.e., are we evaluating using methods that accurately judge quality and offer data useful for improvement)?

There is a sense that the work that most supports our DEI values is not visible in the current evaluation system.

Questions have been raised about whether the College should explore ways to structure compensation so that it is both more transparent and more performance-based.

There is, currently, no clear path to promotion for long-serving part-time faculty.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Not for the initial discussions, certainly.
If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: It is time for a wide-ranging and meaningful conversation among the faculty about how to accurately assess the work that faculty actually do and to ensure that compensation reflects that work. It is also time to discuss whether the current compensation system should be reformed: salaries made more transparent, raises or bonuses based on the year's accomplishments.

Furthermore, we need to discuss how we go about accounting for and assessing a faculty member's work on campus—see the related proposal regarding [anonymous course evaluations](#). This conversation should include both revisiting the instruments of assessment (for what we already count) and figuring out what we do not yet account for/assess at all—[especially since this can have a serious impact on who achieves tenure and promotion](#) (i.e., “invisible labor”, particularly of junior faculty, faculty who identify as women, and [faculty of color](#)).

Finally, the College should consider whether it is time to create more predictable and varied faculty roles outside traditional tenure-track faculty. We could, for example, consider creating transparent paths for promotion for part-time faculty. We might also re-visit the discussion about whether full-time, non-tenure-track positions might benefit the College and provide attractive options for faculty who do not wish to meet research requirements for tenure.

Rationale: There is, at the very least, a corrosive perception that work is not rewarded proportionally by compensation on our campus—e.g., that highly-paid senior faculty do little advising or service, that much labor is invisible, that all raises/bonuses are universal, rather than distributed based on actual workload. While the DEI Planning Committee is not certain what the answer to this perception is, we do believe that it is time for a robust conversation about this issue, with all possibilities on the table. Already begun is an effort on the part of FPPC to better account for the service that faculty perform, and to distribute service more evenly. We applaud this effort and argue for its extension into how we assess teaching, advising, and non-traditional scholarship.

Next Steps: We suggest that FPPC name an *ad hoc* task force to take up these issues. Such a task force should include representation from junior and part-time faculty.

Eliminate Anonymous Course Evaluations

Problem: Anonymous course evaluations have been shown in many studies (see links below) to be of questionable value: first, because they offer few concrete benefits for faculty development; second, because students consistently demonstrate bias against historically-marginalized faculty (women, people of color, LGBTQ+ faculty, international faculty, etc.) in these instruments.

Fundraising Needed (Y/N): N

If Y, then Messaging:

Project Proposal Details: Replace anonymous course evaluations with two things—

1. Student course feedback that is not anonymous. It would be possible to use the current forms, but simply require student names. Another option would be to make the forms confidential but not anonymous (i.e., professors would not see names, but if inappropriate comments are found, appropriate personnel could discover names and initiate a conduct process for the student). More discussion would be required to determine the best format.
2. A mechanism for students to report any inappropriate policies or behavior on the part of faculty anonymously. Again, we could build upon existing policies and structures, including the grade appeal process, the Bias Incident Response Process, and so on.

Rationale: The value of student course evaluations, especially anonymous course evaluations, have been repeatedly called into question. The American Sociological Association’s 2019 statement, [which can be found here](#), contains a useful summary of these problems as well as a bibliography of studies on this issue. From a DEI perspective, it is particularly relevant that—as the ASA statement put it—“in both observational studies and experiments, SETs have been found to be biased against women and people of color.”

As we work to diversify the faculty at a College where teaching effectiveness is the primary criterion for tenure and promotion, it would be counterproductive to continue to use an instrument that has been shown to perpetuate biased feedback.

If the College wishes to continue having student evaluations of courses (and this is up for discussion, as [serious questions have been raised about their effectiveness, above and beyond](#) crucial issues of bias), we recommend that student names be attached to their evaluations, to encourage thoughtful and appropriate feedback.

At the very least—and this is a very distant second—we should establish a mechanism for professors to report inappropriate comments (perhaps to HR, perhaps to the director of the Office of Faculty Development) and to have those comments removed from their record of evaluation.

There are occasions, however, when students use the anonymity of course evaluations to report inappropriate policies/grading/behavior/etc. on the part of faculty. Recognizing that the ability to report such matters anonymously is important, we must provide the means by which such reporting can continue.

Next steps: Bring the issue to FPPC to begin a campus conversation.

Equitable and Transparent Evaluation and Compensation of Staff

Problem: There are disparities and inequities in salary at the institution, whereby staff with similar titles are paid drastically differently. Internal hiring is not always consistent and transparent, and access to promotion or advancement is inconsistent. Establishing equitable and transparent frameworks helps articulate the priorities of the institution and aids in the recruitment and retention of staff. It also helps foster a commitment by the institution to the staff it seeks to hire and retain.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional): Funding is needed for potential added compensation and benefits for staff. [See ideas discussed above.](#)

Project Proposal Details: Ensure equitable performance evaluations and compensation for staff; evaluations should include stated goals, rewards, and accountability if those goals are not met.

Rationale: Equity pay analysis is important for employees of all designations: [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) prohibits wage discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. However, absent pay equity studies, many BIPOC higher education staff (and faculty) salary ranges may be below their White peers and may thus require adjustment. “Equal pay for equal work is not a reality for many people of color. When we control for education, years of experience, occupation and other compensable factors, most men and women of color still earn less than White men” (Equal PayScale, 2020; [the 2022 report is here](#)). Attracting and retaining talented staff through fair compensation practices is critical to an anti-racism framework.

Next Steps:

- Develop equitable evaluation rubrics across all departments at the institution and assess the effectiveness of evaluation tools on a yearly basis.
- Assess pay for all staff across the institution and provide transparent data on salary and pay for all employees of the institution. Make this data accessible to all, in the spirit of transparency and equity.
- Allow for salary negotiation and increased compensation after evaluations and reviews.
- Consider creative ways to help compensate staff. These could include:
 - Professional development funding
 - Tuition benefits that allow for staff to advance their education
 - Daycare services
 - Campus Housing
 - Stipend for gas, personal cellphone, Metra transportation
 - On-campus meal plan
 - Opportunity for staff sabbaticals
- Consider using the [AGB Board of Director’s Statement on Justice, Equity and Inclusion and Guidance for Implementation](#) as a guide for best practices.

Part IV: Individual Projects

Section 5: Sustained Opportunities for DEI Training and Work

Ongoing DEI Training for Staff and Faculty

Problem: Currently, there is no defined expectation for staff and faculty to actively engage in DEI training, beyond online courses at the point of hire, or after major bias events occur on campus. The voluntary nature of participation in essential equity and inclusion preparation means that only a small, self-selecting number of faculty and staff commit to participating in DEI initiatives for professional development. Students have expressed frustration in IAG Community Caucuses with lack of understanding from certain staff or faculty regarding these issues.

Resources/Fundraising Needed: Yes

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

- Provide recurring and sustainable training opportunities for faculty and staff to develop their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Develop a programming schedule that provides both in-person and online workshops.
- Ensure that faculty and staff attend DEI training with agreed-upon regularity.
- Opportunities should be varied enough to ensure that training addresses specific needs of different stakeholders. For example, workshops for faculty could include: “Evidence-Based and Equitable Pedagogy,” “Facilitating Critical Dialogue,” “Pedagogical Strategies for a Neurodiverse Classroom,” or “Decolonizing Your Syllabus.”
- Workshops for student-facing faculty and staff could include “Supporting Students in Response to Racial, Ethnic, or Gendered Violence in the News,” “Allyship: Becoming an Advocate on Campus,” “Addressing Micro-Aggressions in the Workplace,” “Supporting Diverse Students Through Online and Digital Engagement.”
- Consider expanding the Intergroup Dialogue program—to be launched in 2022-2023—to include faculty and staff. See also the [Curriculum Content Areas and Difficult Conversations](#) proposal.

Rationale:

In order to increase campus-wide commitment to improving equity and inclusion, we must ensure that all members of the College community are prepared to support the changes that come with expanding DEI efforts. To do this, there has to be a well-defined expectation for all stakeholders to actively engage with DEI training.

Next Steps:

- Define expectations and required level of engagement.
- Create replicable and sustainable campus-wide training opportunities. These can involve a mix of live and pre-recorded, in-person and online/hybrid opportunities, to ensure ample participation.
- Generate criteria for evaluating staff and faculty participation in DEI training.

Curriculum Content Areas and Training for Difficult Conversations

Problem: While major advancements have been made in diversifying our curriculum, particularly with the creation of the African American Studies department and the augmenting of the Latin American/LatinX Studies program, we should plan for further content diversity. Furthermore, we should explore the ways that we can encourage/train all faculty to diversify their syllabi and learn to handle classroom discussions about challenging topics.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Grant funding would be worth investigating, including the Mellon Foundation’s current “Humanities for All Time” grant line. Further, raising money for new faculty lines would be worth exploring (as was done for the hiring of key AFAM and LNAM faculty), as would funding for relevant initiatives, such as new programs or Intergroup Dialogue. Finally, we could allocate College resources in targeted ways to encourage faculty development and course development—for example, via course development and revision grants.

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

- Continue to build curricular content focused on historically-underrepresented groups. This could include expanding current departments and programs devoted to such content (notably, AFAM, LNAM, ASIA, and ISWS). Further, we might explore whether new programs should be added (e.g., Indigenous Studies, Disability Studies, and so on). However, we warn against founding new programs without adequate funding and staffing—this leads to faculty burnout and anemic programs.
- Encourage faculty across the curriculum to incorporate content that addresses historically-underrepresented groups, and/or engages with issues of privilege and marginalization in its myriad forms.
 - One way to do so might be to establish course development/revision grants. As an example: more than 10 years ago, there was an initiative to expand the course offerings in Islamic World Studies, and faculty were offered a stipend to revise their courses accordingly. That model could work again, both for finding courses to count for programs and/or to increase appropriate content in any course.
- Encourage faculty (and staff and students) to acquire skills in conducting “difficult conversations”. The challenge we face as faculty is not just incorporating/developing new material into the curriculum, but rather an understandable reluctance to engage in difficult conversations out of fear that we lack the skills to engage appropriately. While the Office of Faculty Development has offered ideas and training opportunities over the last three years (and will continue to do so), more systematic opportunities to build concrete skills, in programs such as Intergroup Dialogue, could be transformative. Specific ideas/areas to explore include:
 - Could Intergroup Dialogue training become part of New Student Orientation?
 - Intergroup Dialogue courses are being developed for the College—can count for Domestic Pluralism and (for student facilitators) Experiential Learning
 - Ways to encourage faculty and staff to take part in such training.

Rationale: We are, first and foremost, an educational institution, and offering educational content to our students around issues of diversity and marginalization is crucial. We need to help our

community members acquire the skills to have these conversations and to enrich our course offerings/content accordingly.

Next Steps:

- Explore expansion plan for LNAM (Office of Alumni and Development might explore fundraising opportunities to support this)
- Explore interest/funds for other possible content areas or for the enrichment of existing courses with new material (Faculty, CPC, OFD grants)
- Explore further training for faculty (and staff and students) in difficult conversations and Intergroup Dialogue (via OFD programming, student orientation, etc.)

DEI Certificate Program for Students

Problem: A large percentage of students do not actively participate in DEI initiatives throughout campus. Students associated with Office of Intercultural Relations have expressed frustration with the lack of engagement with DEI concerns and activities from the majority White population of students on campus.

Resources/Fundraising Needed: No
If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details:

- Create a Certificate in DEI. For students who rarely engage with DEI, this would create an incentive to participate in DEI initiatives and attend events by offering something tangible that they can add to their resumes and graduate school applications. For those who are already involved in DEI work, this would offer a way to recognize the work of students attending DEI events and initiatives.
- Promote the certificate opportunity to students via departments, the OIR list-serve, and other campus partners. Such promotion could emphasize the importance of DEI across different industries and professions in today's world to generate interest.
- Create safe spaces for students unfamiliar with DEI topics to discuss difficult subjects. Offer training—via Intergroup Dialogue and other means—to build skills in difficult conversations.
- OIR would offer one DEI workshop or talk per month that students could attend. Students completing a certificate would be required to attend a specific number of workshops throughout the year. Workshops will be varied, to appeal to students with different academic, career, and personal interests. For example, OIR and CAC could conduct a workshop for pre-professional students interested in healthcare on social determinants of health.
- Students pursuing a certificate would also be required to attend a specific number of qualifying events (talks, film screenings, etc.).
- Students would complete a self-reflection progress sheet as they participate in workshops and events, that would be submitted when they have completed all the requirements.

Rationale:

The College needs to take a proactive approach to encourage all students, regardless of identity group, to engage with DEI topics and initiatives. Offering a certificate recognizes the fact that engaging in these activities and working towards an equitable and anti-racist community requires hard work. ([See also the Student Equity Intern/Ambassador Proposal.](#)) This form of tangible recognition would ensure that BIPOC and other students already doing this work would receive appropriate recognition, and it would also encourage students who may not have considered participating in these events to become more engaged. Students could present this certificate in their resumes and graduate school applications, thereby making their applications more competitive.

Next Steps:

- Watch the campus conversation around the establishment of a College-wide system of certificates; if the system is implemented, propose a DEI Certificate under its aegis. In the

meantime, consider the possibility of having students enroll and complete a less formal certificate program through Moodle or my.involvement.

- Evaluate what existing programming and events would be recognized towards the certificate.
- Plan a list of DEI workshops for next academic year that would be offered to students. Specify requirements and type of recognition.
- This could also be offered as faculty programming, with a different set of workshops geared towards equitable and inclusive evidence-based teaching—see the [Ongoing DEI Training for Faculty and Staff](#) and [Curriculum Content Areas and Difficult Conversations](#) proposals.

Student Equity Intern/Ambassador Program

Problem: Students are not being compensated for the important contributions they bring to equity work at the College. This, combined with the fatigue of equity work at an institution like Lake Forest, often causes students to become significantly less motivated to participate by their junior or senior year.

Resources/Fundraising Needed (Y/N): Y

If Fundraising Needed, Messaging Ideas (optional):

Project Proposal Details: Build a program for students to receive pay and/or academic credit for the equity work they do on campus. This program would consist of two groups of students:

1. Equity Interns, who work directly with the College to do work on committees and councils, collaborate with offices and individuals on campus, and lead projects within the Lake Forest College community that focus on issues of inequity. These interns would be paid and/or could receive academic credit for their work with the College.
2. Equity Ambassadors are students who would conduct projects in an effort to gain an experiential understanding of what equity work can look like in their academic area of interest. This can look like research, advocacy campaigns, community initiatives, etc., all of which can occur within and use the Lake Forest College community as a resource, but the work done by ambassadors is not in partnership or for the institution. The student ambassadors will select a faculty advisor to serve as their academic resource, while the staff member who operates the Student Equity Program will supervise their projects on a weekly basis.

Rationale: Lake Forest College students have for years been heavily involved in equity work at the college. As our student body continues to engage in these issues and provide invaluable labor and leadership to these important efforts, it only makes sense to compensate that student work with academic credit and/or pay. The uncompensated nature of equity work at the College means that students who were vocal leaders and participants at the beginning of their academic career at the College often choose to disengage as they head into their junior and senior years. Equity work is often personal, emotional, and involves a practice of resistance, all of which makes it tiring. Such vital work on behalf of the College should be compensated and, where appropriate, appear on the transcript.

Next Steps: Consider how this program would intersect with new on-campus internships, approved in February 2022.

Consider how this program would be overseen and supervised: we suggest that it be done by the [Student Advocacy Coordinator](#) or College Ombudsperson (once hired), who would report in turn to the [Chief Diversity Officer](#). The Career Advancement Center might also be involved.

Part V. Appendices

Appendix 1: Course Fs and Student Demographics (with thanks to Kyle Diep for this data)

*In any given category, numbers may not add up to 100% as blank fields were excluded

Academic Year	% F Non-White*	% Pop. Non-White*	% F White*	% Pop. White*
2020-21	70.9%	50.8%	29.1%	49.1%
2019-20	60.2%	45.6%	39.8%	54.2%
2018-19	55.1%	42.8%	44.9%	55.9%
2017-18	54.5%	42.3%	45.5%	56.6%
2016-17	40.2%	41.9%	59.8%	56.6%
5-year average	56.2%	44.7%	43.8%	54.5%

Academic Year	% F 1st gen*	% Pop. 1st gen*	% F Non-1st gen*	% Pop. Non-1st gen*
2020-21	41.8%	31.7%	50.8%	66.6%
2019-20	41.8%	28.1%	55.1%	67.2%
2018-19	44.9%	27.4%	49.4%	66.3%
2017-18	32.7%	26.2%	50.0%	65.5%
2016-17	27.6%	26.2%	50.6%	63.8%
5-year average	37.8%	27.9%	51.2%	65.9%

Academic Year	% F Pell	% Pop. Pell	% F Non-Pell	% Pop. Non-Pell
2020-21	44.4%	36.5%	55.6%	63.5%
2019-20	44.9%	34.2%	55.1%	65.8%
2018-19	51.7%	35.2%	48.3%	64.8%
2017-18	48.2%	36.9%	51.8%	63.1%
2016-17	42.5%	35.8%	57.5%	64.2%
5-year average	46.3%	35.7%	53.7%	64.3%

Appendix 2
Campus Spaces Research

Report to the
Intercultural Advisory Group
at
Lake Forest College
on
Diversity and Inclusion at Lake Forest College

Compiled from data collected and analyzed by students
in SOAN 320: Qualitative Methods

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Gaby Silva
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Madeline Trost

Under the direction of Professor Holly Swyers, Anthropologist
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

On November 4, 2019, members of the SOAN 320: Qualitative Methods course taught by Holly Swyers conducted six focus groups on campus. The focus groups were designed to elicit feedback from members of the student body about data that the Methods students had collected about ways in which Lake Forest College students experienced the diversity of campus. The focus groups ranged in size from 3 to 8 participants and a total of 31 students participated in the focus groups. Of these, 11 identified as male and 20 identified as female. Each focus group was racially and ethnically mixed, and a total of 11 white students, 9 Asian students, 7 Latinx students, and 4 Black students participated. The Methods class had initially recruited 46 students, so fully 2/3 of those recruited participated. This is a relatively high yield, which suggests that students were motivated to participate in the focus groups, although whether that was out of a sense of obligation to their recruiter or out of a desire to discuss diversity on campus is unclear.

Each focus group was run by a moderator and had at least one notetaker (most had two). Moderators presented a slide show sharing the results of four projects the Methods students had done to explore campus climate (see appendix). As each set of results was presented, moderators solicited reactions from their focus group participants, inviting them to challenge, reflect on, or explain the results. The balance of this report is broken into subsections, describing the data that was presented and the student reactions.

Free lists: Diversity = acceptance, but only for students of color

Methods students had collected free lists from 81 students at Lake Forest College, asking them what words they associated with diversity. The most interesting finding in the analysis of the free lists was that students of color were very likely to list the word “acceptance” as a word associated with diversity, but no white student included the word acceptance in their list. After this information was shared with the members of the focus groups, moderators asked focus group participants for their initial reactions, how they interpreted the presence of the word acceptance in conjunction with diversity for students of color, and what they thought this information revealed about how Lake Forest college might be experienced differently by different races/ethnicities on campus.

One student mentioned that the results made her consider the mentality of white students versus students of color. She said since our college consists mostly of white, heterosexual students, “White students do not feel the need to be accepted.” A South Asian student in a different group observed, “White people have been in the power of position for a long time, so it is evident that white people wouldn’t put themselves in the position of those who have been oppressed for many years. Since they have been getting acceptance, it is more likely that they wouldn’t mention it.” A Latino in yet another group noted, “This might come down who wants or craves acceptance. White people have acceptance in their community whereas other races such as African Americans might want to achieve acceptance.” A Latina commuter described the atmosphere of the town of Lake Forest as very “white,” which feels very different from her home in Waukegan and contributes to a sense of needing acceptance, while in another group, a South African used the free list data to acknowledge different definitions of diversity and pointed out from his perspective, “Your race determines your definition of diversity.” In the face of conversations like this, a white student said, “Ideally, we all want to say that we are accepting, but that is not always the case.”

Maps of Campus: Where students feel safe/unsafe or welcome/unwelcome

Another project Methods students undertook was using maps to conduct interviews of students about how they experienced campus. Each Methods student interviewed at least one other student,

opening the interview by showing the interviewee three maps of campus (North, Middle, and South). Interviewees were asked to circle where they spent the most time, to put a check mark on places they felt safe/welcome, and to put an x mark on places they felt unsafe/unwelcome. Then they were asked a series of questions about their maps. Twenty students were interviewed, with equal distributions of men, women, white people, and people of color. The maps and interview responses were analyzed and aggregated, and during the focus groups, Methods students showed participants the maps of campus. Among other things, the maps identified four quasi-public spaces on campus where students described spending the most time: the library, the student center, the cafeteria, and the Sports Center. Of those four spaces, only one (the library) was consistently deemed safe/welcoming. Among more private spaces (particularly residence halls), North campus tended to be described as relatively less safe/welcoming than South, a discovery that surprised focus group participants.

In one group, a woman commented, “The reactions to South Campus surprised me because I feel very unsafe or unwelcome on South. I don’t necessarily find the Sports Center unsafe or unwelcome because I am usually there with my friends. I might feel weird if there is a sports team practicing. But the South campus quad always makes me very uncomfortable. I just don’t like the vibes there.” A male student asked her, “Is it because of the football players?” The woman responded, “A lot of the athletes live on South campus. I feel super comfortable on Middle and North campus. Maybe it’s because I am not as familiar with South campus.”

Another group engaged in a spirited conversation about why the Sports Center was perceived as welcoming to so many of the interviewees. There were no athletes in this focus group, and none of them felt comfortable on South campus. An Asian woman stated “As like a female, I am at the gym often and it can be threatening a bit. There is a swarm of football players and it is open to the community, so you have people staring you down.” A white woman said of South campus more generally, “I stayed for the summer and sometimes I would feel unsafe and unwelcome, but that was mostly because of the reputation of South campus. I heard that there would be a lot of harassment.” The theme of women feeling particularly unsafe in particular spaces came up in yet another focus group, where a woman stated, “I feel like the Sports Center feels unsafe along with the caf, because when I go, I notice that the football team clearly checks out girls. I don't want to be objectified and that's what it feels like is happening, so I stay away from both places.”

A group that was primarily composed of commuters was “shocked” to discover that people felt more uncomfortable in North than on South. They mentioned that they see more people of color in North, whereas they felt least safe and welcome in the South Campus Quad. They felt that the only people they saw on South were white athletes in groups. Another group focused on the perceptions of Middle campus, with a Bulgarian woman describing a pattern she saw in the maps where students feel safer in places used for academics than in social spaces. Every person in this group seemed surprised that North had this common stereotype of being “unsafe.”

After the focus groups, Methods students reflected that the interviews from which they built their maps included many students who lived on South, while focus group participants tended to live on North or Middle or were commuters, which may be part of what produced the strong disagreement between interview results and focus group results. This did not reflect a conscious sampling decision, but it is a useful observation. Within the focus groups, the idea of the relevance of where you live was voiced in at least three groups. There was the observation of the woman noted above who was less familiar with South campus. Then there was this comment from a Latino: “It comes to

down to where you are from, where you stay to party. If you live on North campus, you will feel most safe. When you go out to new territory, you might feel unsafe.” A similar view came from a South African man, who said he has never felt particularly unsafe or unwelcome on campus. He said that for him, and to others who live on North, North is their own space where they have built a certain safeness to it. These points connect to the next set of data presented in the focus groups.

Social Networks and Clique-ishness

One of the more surprising answers in the map interviews came to the question, “Do your friends share your relationship to different places on campus? If not, how do they experience places differently?” With only one exception, every interviewee reported that their friends experienced campus in the same way that they did. This information guided data collection for a social network analysis. Methods students each identified three people with whom they hung out the most, then asked those three people to list the three people they hung out with most, and then asked the resulting list of nine people whom they hung out with the most. After each student listed the people they hung out with, Methods students asked the gender and race/ethnicity of each person listed and asked how they knew each other. The resulting 17 networks had surprisingly few overlaps, despite containing over 300 unique individuals. Two thirds of the the social networks were homogenous along race and gender lines, and many were homogenous based on sports teams. Moderators presented this information to focus group participants, combining it with an observation from the map interviews that students tended to describe most spaces on campus as safe if they were with their friends. They also shared information they had gathered doing observations on campus: students who were in groups tended to interact exclusively with their groups, and solo students tended to avoid interaction altogether.

Methods students described what they perceived as a tendency for Lake Forest College students to find their groups and stay within them relatively exclusively and asked focus groups for their response to this observation. In one focus group, many participants said they hang out with people who have the same culture or racial identity as them because they are the most comfortable around people who are similar to them. One student of color in that group commented, “I think culture plays a big role as well. If there are similarities between people, then they tend to hang out more. I went to a UWC and I tend to hang out with other students who also went to UWCs.” In another focus group, participants acknowledged that there are obvious groups on campus but that they did not think any of this was intentional or negative. Instead they regarded it as a product of how people have met and associate. Participants in this group argued for some kind of event or way of getting people to interact more and get to know other people on campus. Another group thought it would be good for groups to branch out, but they didn’t think that people having their own groups was at all a bad thing. They perceived it as “just how students happen to get to know people.”

A junior in another focus group, after hearing the Moderator’s explanation of what the Methods students discovered, stated, “One reason for this is that we are a small school. Once you find your people you stick to them.” The participants in this group talked about how cliques can seem like they are based on “look-a-likes,” but that is not always the case. They claimed groups are formed through academic and social interests, but also through orientation groups. As they explored this theme, they also discussed the idea that discomfort is a factor in how campus groups form. A white international woman said, “Most friends I met through First Connection, and I had a hard time connecting to white native students as they did not have much in common with me. They did not make an effort to understand other students.” A Black woman mentioned that people who grew up around other people of color, regardless of their race, were friendlier towards her, thus making her

hang out with them more. She felt that white people who grew up around only white people felt a little stiff for her so she chooses not to hang out with them. A white student reinforced the point, mentioning that this was because if there is even the slightest tension or difference within a group, she felt uncomfortable.

As a point of contrast, two students of color in a different focus group pointed out that they had spent their lives at PWIs (primarily white institutions), and that put them in situations where they were forced to make friends across racial lines. As one of them stated, “People won’t come to us, so we have to go out there and talk to people.” For a white student who also had attended a primarily white high school, the effect was different. He stated, “I went to a high school that was predominantly white, so I feel like we’re exposed to more culture and diversity here. I don’t mind it but I wouldn’t go out of my way to talk to them.” Without experience of a more diverse institution to guide social interactions across racial and ethnic lines, he preferred not to make the effort. This may have contributed to a point made in another focus group: “It is easy for homogeneity to happen.”

In contrast to other groups, though, the same student went on to say, “It results in a lack of education between groups.” In one group, participants described an unspoken hierarchy established by athletic teams on campus, prompting a discussion of how the athletes should try to get more in touch with the school so that they don’t miss out on a lot of different social connections. An athlete in the group shared her experiences trying to socialize outside of her sports team, and how her team would almost shame/berate her trying to get to know other people. A note taker for this group wrote, “As she explained it, it seems like certain sports teams sought to foster almost clannish behavior that other students noticed.” A final note, which may warrant more attention, came from a focus group where a woman noted that the creation of cliques and the lack of branching out between groups on campus is due to a fear of rejection.

Conclusions

While few people would dispute that Lake Forest College is relatively diverse in terms of numbers, Methods students’ data collection revealed the ways the campus fails at inclusivity. The data collected via free lists, interviews, social network analyses, observations, and focus groups revealed that Lake Forest College students are inclined to find social groups as quickly as possible upon arrival at college and stick within them. This strategy reflects students’ deep discomfort at being alone, and, for women on campus, is a deliberate strategy to improve their sense of safety on campus. The groups that form, however, are striking for their internal homogeneity along race and gender lines. The latter may reflect the safety question for women, but the former results in a sense of alienation and lack of inclusion on the part of students of color and international students. Many perceive US white students as unwilling to accept their overtures of friendship (or see white students feeling those overtures as uncomfortable) and see themselves as a tolerated group on campus as opposed to an included group.

Ironically, measures taken to help students connect with one another in early stages of their college career seem to have a calcifying effect on student groups that may explain how this racial/ethnic divide is established. Two significant groups arrive on campus ahead of the rest of the student body: fall athletes and students who are either international students or from historically underrepresented groups. During the time before classes start, both groups are encouraged to bond internally, but there appears to be minimal connection between the two groups. This lack of connection may be exacerbated by geography; student athletes tend to live on South campus near the athletic facilities,

while many international students live in Cleveland Young, potentially making North campus the center for the First Connection group. When first year students who did not participate in either First Connection or fall athletics arrive on campus, they are confronted with two already formed polities. For those in athletics, there is a potential draw to the fall athlete group, while students of color or who might otherwise feel historically marginalized may be more likely to gravitate toward the First Connection group. The balance of students might be most influenced by geography and the sense of “pull” each group exercises on them.

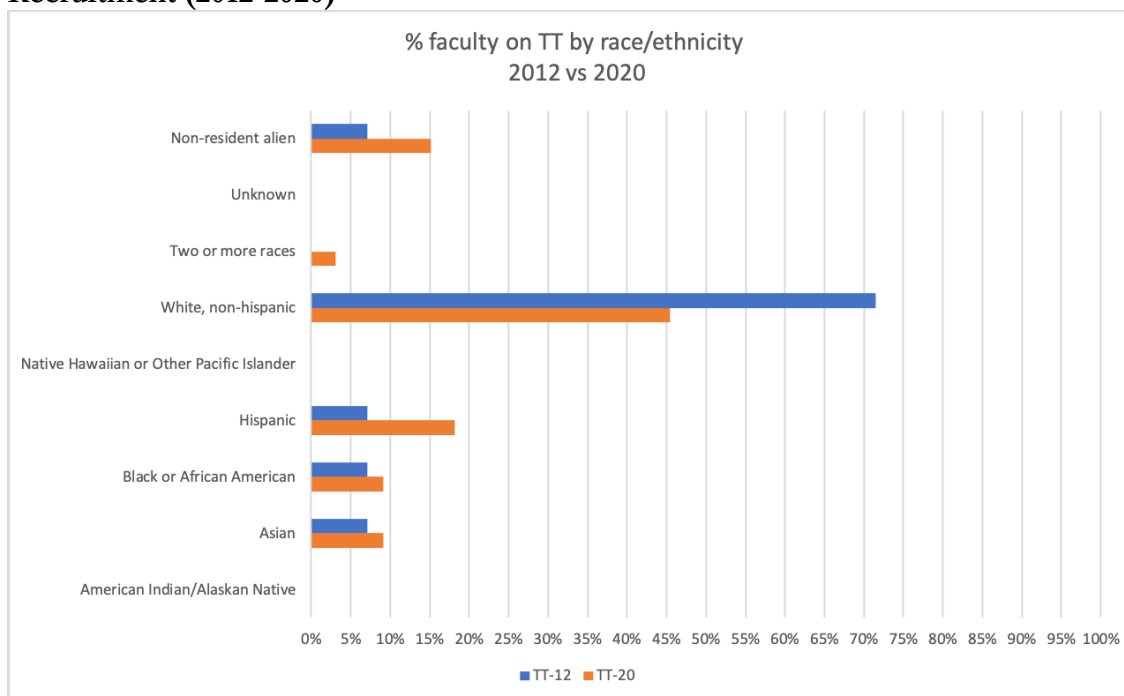
An unintended consequence of this pattern of early summer arrivals is that Lake Forest College effectively becomes a campus experienced very differently by two different groups. That these groups are also characterized as being racially distinct from one another exacerbates the biases and anxieties around race and ethnicity that students bring to campus. For many students on campus, diversity on campus means no more than coexisting in the same space, with very little cause or opportunity for connecting across social lines. The very practices that operate to help students find friends and connections on campus also serve to isolate students of different backgrounds from one another. For white US American students on campus, they can continue to exist in a PWI environment without worrying about what else might be occurring on campus, but for students of color and white international students, the passive disregard of their white US American peers is felt as dismissal and an unwillingness to connect: i.e., a lack of acceptance.

There are a number of additional angles from which to research the apparent divide on campus. The first and most obvious is to examine the perception that athletics are predominantly white and that students of color are less engaged in athletic groups. Which students bridge groups organized around athletics and those organized around cultural identity, and how do they perceive the experiences of their peers? It also would be useful to consider how events and student experiences outside of academics are scheduled. To what extent are cultural events and athletic events scheduled in the same blocks of time, compelling students to choose how to spend their time in ways that may decrease opportunities for connections between groups? A more complicated problem to consider is the way that anxieties about social rejection are playing out for students. What strategies can students learn that will help them feel less risk-averse in connecting with others? Finally, what is the experience of students who find themselves outside of both athletic and cultural identity groups? How do they navigate the social terrain of campus, and what do their social networks look like? To what extent do academic majors or social clubs produce strong social ties on par with those that appear to develop for athletic teams and cultural identity groups?

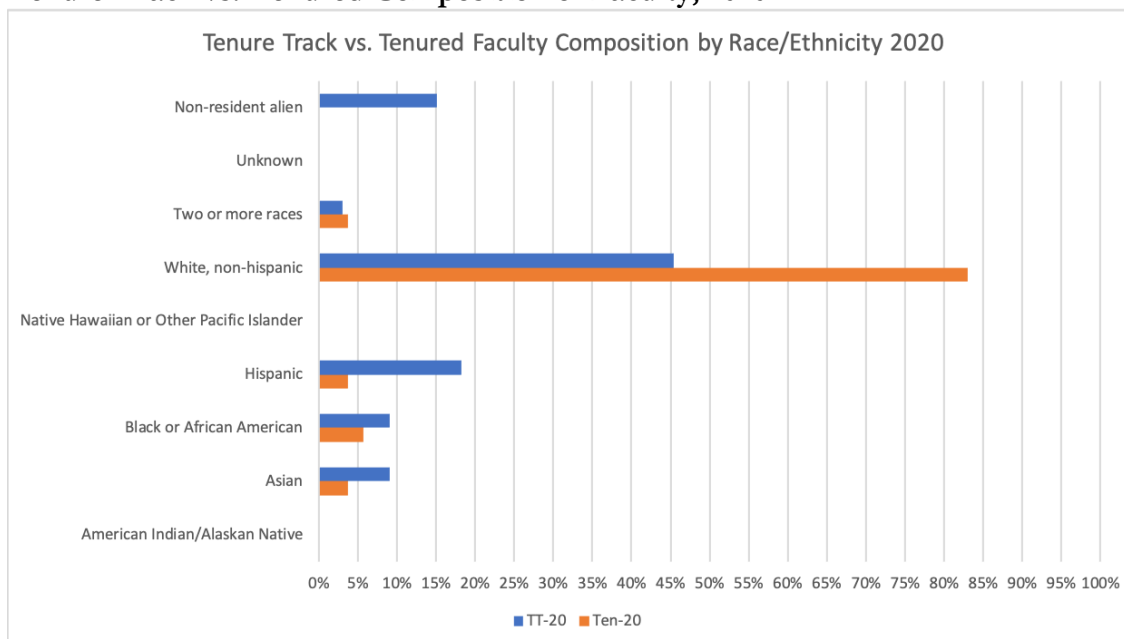
Appendix 3: Retention of Faculty (Tenured/Tenure-Track)

All data is pulled from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), to which we annually report the racial/ethnic and gender composition of all our employees. The data is maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Recruitment (2012-2020)



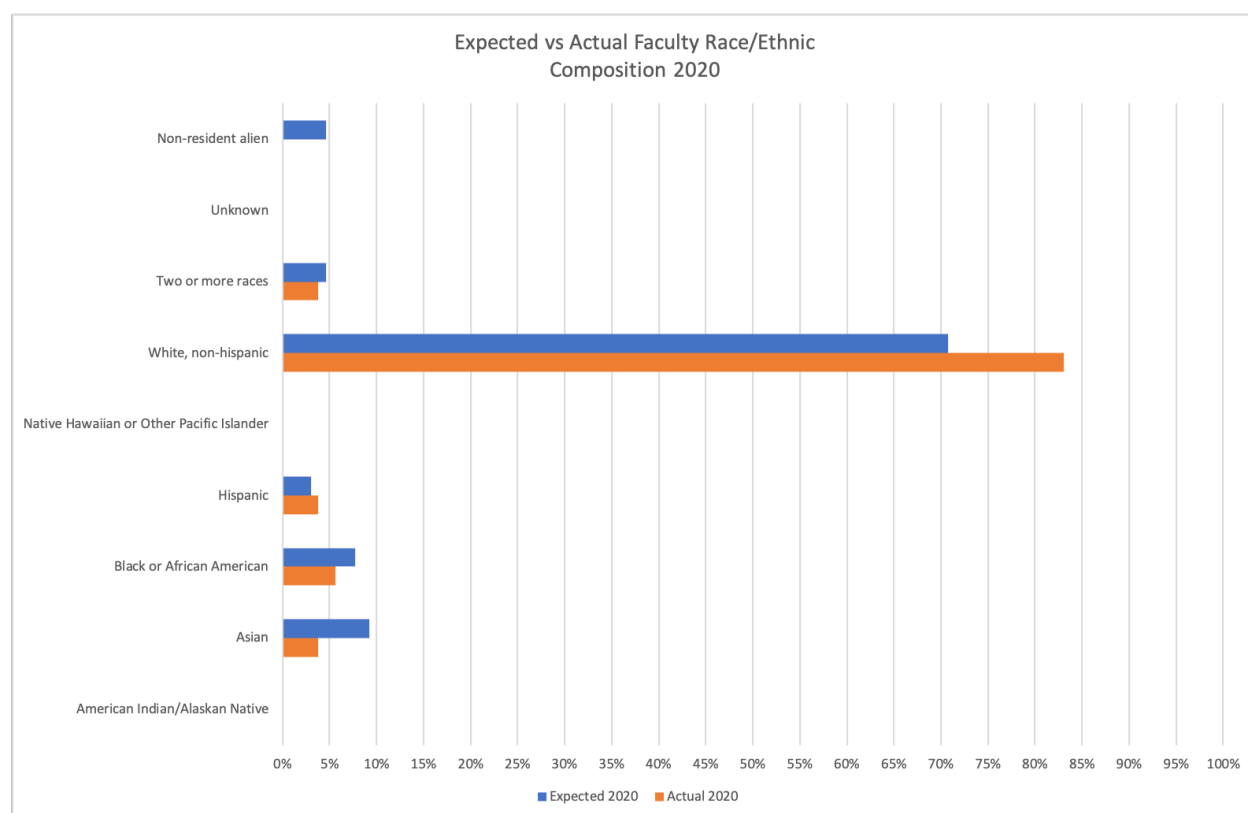
Tenure-Track vs. Tenured Composition of Faculty, 2020



Expected vs. Actual Composition of the Tenured faculty in 2020

How expected composition was calculated (assumptions):

- Faculty go up for tenure in their 6th year, which means anyone on tenure track in 2012 or 2013 (we do not have data for 2014)—if retained—would be tenured in 2020. There was some tenure track-attribution between 2012 and 2013 which could not be accounted for with an increase in tenured individuals within a particular race/ethnic group between 2019 and 2020. When this happened, I used the number of tenure-track individuals from 2012 instead of 2013.
- Between 2012-2019 there were 24 faculty retirements. I subtracted those faculty from the relevant race/ethnicity groups in years subsequent to their retirements.
- I added the tenure-track faculty from 2012 or 2013 (as noted in the first point above) to the remaining number of tenured faculty after subtracting the retirees. During this period of time (2012-2020), the overall size of the full-time tenured and tenure track faculty shrank from 89 people to 86 people.



While we appear to be retaining White and Hispanic faculty at a higher-than-expected rate, we are doing far less well at retaining Black and Asian faculty. The “Non-resident alien” category is harder to parse, since it may reflect changes in immigration status that would cause individuals in that category to be absorbed into a different demographic category over time.



**Residential Planning Group
Final Report
May 2022**

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INTRODUCTION

Lake Forest College has long been established as a residential, liberal arts college, and we impose a residency requirement (with appropriate exemptions offered) that upholds that ideal. This planning process, which brought together faculty and staff in various departments, affords us the opportunity to consider important questions about the nature of our residential campus and the ways we do – or don't – meet the needs of both our residential and commuting students. Our residential experience matters throughout the student's life cycle at the College:

- it shapes prospective student (and family) decisions about their college choice,
- the mission for the residential program supports the overall educational mission of the College,
- the community that's created on campus should create a sense of belonging that leads to student success and retention, and
- this student satisfaction may lead to increased alumni/donor engagement.

Currently, our residence halls are full to their capacity. The large first-year classes in 2021 and (projected for) 2022 will test our ability to accommodate all those that wish to live on campus, which is currently about 70% of the population. There are limited rental options available in the nearby community to absorb our growth; housing immediately surrounding campus is too expensive for students, but students do commute from home or choose more affordable options further from campus as a way to take control over their meal planning and potentially save money.

As the College enrollment grows, so does our commuting population, which has more than doubled in the past 13 years. As is often the case for residential liberal arts colleges in or adjacent to urban areas, we have a larger commuting population than many of our peers (approximately 30% of our student body). It is sometimes difficult for commuting students to integrate into the campus community, but in other ways we are fortunate for growth in the commuting population since the number of beds on campus remains relatively unchanged for the past ten years. A larger student body – both commuting and residential – creates pressure for campus parking, which is already full.

Residential liberal arts colleges in rural areas or smaller cities often have a 90-98% residency rate, but to achieve that we would need to build new residence halls or expand the current buildings, since our buildings are currently at capacity. New builds or expansions are difficult to imagine due to the expense, and we are already facing the financial burden of deferred maintenance in our current

residence halls. While some crucial health and safety renovation projects are slated for the summer of 2022, the condition of our buildings vary widely, with some buildings as old as 1908 and others having only minor renovations since being built in the 1960s. The last major investment in residence halls was the 2012 construction of Moore Hall. Some of the facility maintenance, and our need for more parking, will need to be addressed before a more complete planning process can be endeavored.

As briefly mentioned above: when we discuss the residential experience on our campus, we mean to include both the facilities, programs, staff, and systems that support our residential students living on campus, but also the impact of our vibrant residential community on our non-residential (i.e. commuting or living locally) population. We are keen to understand the ways that the residential experience shapes all students, and how it contributes to the lively nature of our campus community.

For students living on campus, there is an unmet demand for singles and private bathrooms. These desires for privacy can feel at odds with our priorities around building community, which is more important than ever as we emerge from a pandemic that has necessarily kept people apart. There has been turnover in the office of Residence Life that has led to periods of being short-staffed, and we need to improve that picture so the team can focus on community building in the student experience. Finally, we heard that many students stretch to afford room and board, and there is some student demand for less expensive meal plans. And yet, the College doesn't bring in enough money via room and board to break even and address the annual and long term repairs that are needed.

All of these factors and more have led the Residential Planning group to offer three key recommendations.

I. MASTER PLAN

As noted above, there are serious considerations regarding the condition of existing residence halls due to age, the capacity of those buildings compared to demand, and the configuration of the student desired offerings (communal rooms, kitchens, washrooms, and availability of singles). At the same time, we note that these residence halls are fully in use, including during the summer, so that there is no down time for refreshing or repairs. In addition, there is a serious shortage of parking on campus, which impacts faculty, staff, commuters,

residential students, and guests at College events. Addressing any of these issues will be expensive and there is a significant need to prioritize.

The last time the College did a Master Plan for facilities and grounds was in 2001. At that time, the report noted a variety of needs around campus, some of which have since been addressed. It is time to begin a new master plan for facilities that will address competing needs for resources.

Priority Recommendation: Develop a Facility Master Plan that will outline the needed renovations to the residence halls and address the parking situation.

Key Questions:

1. What is the state of deferred maintenance in our existing residence halls?

There are ten residence halls that vary in age from 1908 to 2012. There is not a single report or assessment that covers the condition of all buildings. During FY22, an engineering firm was consulted to evaluate the condition of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems in five buildings. Additionally, the ventilation and air conditioning systems were evaluated in Nollen and Deerpath, due to ongoing concerns about humidity. These reports are available in the Business Office. These reports do not address the envelope of the buildings, which would include roofs, windows, walls and foundations. In short, **we do not have a complete picture of deferred maintenance in the residence halls.**

Plans are made to address, in the summer of 2022, the most significant areas of risk: the plumbing and heating systems in Harlan and Blackstone, and the aging boiler that heats Gregory, McClure and Roberts. The next priorities will be the dedicated outdoor air system (DOAS) unit and the roof for Deerpath, and then the humidity challenges in Nollen. We note that Lois is of the same age as Harlan and Blackstone, with similar galvanized steel piping and similar vulnerability. The "Quads" (Gregory, Roberts, and McClure) were built in the 1960s and have infrastructure issues that reflect being 60 years old.

Recommendation: The College should do a complete Facilities Assessment of the residence halls to determine what the deferred maintenance issues are.

2. Should we add new residence halls or tear down existing halls?

The question pertains to two further underlying issues:

a. Are the existing residence halls past their useful life and economically not worth keeping?

Without a complete facility assessment, this question cannot be completely answered. However, it is noted that some of the oldest residence halls were determined to be worth renovating this summer. The question of “useful life” seems to be more about whether the configuration of the building (quads, doubles, singles, air conditioning) makes the buildings undesirable by students in the long run. The buildings will require renewal, and that cost will increase as it is delayed, but the existing buildings are filling a market demand for housing that is not currently available elsewhere.

Recommendation: As above, the College should do a complete Facilities Assessment of the residence halls to determine what the deferred maintenance issues are.

b. Does a future strategy for housing indicate an increase or decrease in demand compared to the existing capacity?

Admissions spoke to the current importance of being able to offer housing on campus: unless the student is local, there is an expectation that housing will be provided. Many local students also want the experience of living on campus, and about half of transfer students are looking for housing. Last summer there was a waiting list for housing, which created anxiety for some First Years and caused some Transfer students to go elsewhere.

Yet, we noted that our commuter population has grown as a percent of the overall student body. Local students are most likely to commute for financial reasons, many indicating that they are saving money by living at home. Many of us were surprised to learn that the College has about 500 commuting students this year, in comparison to 265 in Fall 2004. Thankfully, our overall increase in enrollment has been accommodated by this shift in housing demand, because residential housing would not be available for additional students.

We note again that the current capacity is in demand at an enrollment of 1650. Some of this demand can be considered artificial, since the College has adopted a mandatory residency policy for students in the first three years (subject to certain exclusions). However, in the senior year there is no exaggerated flight to live off campus. A contributing factor is

the residential community around the College; a limited number of apartments and rental houses may be available but they require a car to commute to campus and the rentals that are closest to campus are not as affordable as those farther away.

If enrollment should drop as the demographic cliff puts pressure on yield, we could see the need to shutter a residence hall. If enrollment should increase, we could evaluate the possibility of contracting with apartment complexes in North Chicago or Highwood. Increasing the density within the existing halls is not a good option given the pressure for more communal spaces and more private space (see below).

Recommendation: For now, develop flexible contingency plans for a decrease or increase in enrollment that does not involve tearing down or building a new residence hall.

3. Do the existing buildings meet the needs of current students and provide the type of accommodation that competitors provide?

We approached this in two ways. We spoke with students and with the Residence Life staff to understand the needs within the buildings, and we spoke with Admissions staff to get their feedback about what families have said regarding competitor offerings.

Students are asking for singles. This is sometimes expressed through a disability accommodation request. It is also clear through the room selection process that singles are in high demand. The room configuration most in demand is the single in Nollen, which shares a washroom with only two other students. The four-person “quad” rooms in McClure, Roberts and Gregory are the least popular; these are two rooms (that require the “back” room’s residents to walk through the “front” room) with a private bathroom for four people. Community washrooms used by more than six people are not desired.

Community kitchens are very popular. Students will travel to the halls that have kitchen access: Moore, McClure and Cleveland-Young. Middle campus has no kitchen at all. The type and availability of communal gathering spaces varies. While the Mohr Student Center is popular for early evening gatherings, students prefer to congregate in spaces within the halls to continue socializing. The temporary tent on South Campus, set up for outside classes during the pandemic, was also mentioned as a popular gathering space.

Admissions staff spoke about the impact of our housing stock on their work. Although it is not the most important consideration, the quality of the housing sometimes becomes the tipping factor at the end in getting student to commit to a deposit. Admissions indicated that a “sense of community” and evidence of customer service are more important considerations. However, they also thought it not unreasonable to conclude that fewer overnight visits during the pandemic might have had a favorable impact on enrollment. Parents are more likely than students to comment on the quality of the spaces, including being surprised about community washrooms. Admissions is careful about which housing spaces are shown to applicants, but overnight visits are dependent upon the students who offer to host.

We understand that this is not an amenity race and we are not desperately far behind our competitors, but some upgrading would be an advantage so that furniture, furnishings, and communal spaces would look (and be) inviting. Admissions concluded that money put into the existing halls, as opposed to constructing brand new facilities, would be preferred.

Recommendation: In a master planning exercise, develop plans to upgrade the existing residence halls to provide more singles, fewer students per washroom, more communal kitchen space, and more community space that meets the specific interests of students.

4. How should we address parking problems?

With the increase in enrollment and, proportionately, the larger increase in commuters, the demand for parking has become a significant problem. Spaces are often not available on Middle Campus in the middle of the day, leaving commuter students and faculty circling for spots. Faculty and staff who arrive early are assured of spots but dare not leave for lunch. There are frequently spots open at Glen Rowan, but these spots are either not top of mind or are considered too far for walking purposes.

On South Campus, events in the Sports and Recreation Center or the Ice Rink will often necessitate Parking Restriction emails from Public Safety. This February, parking restrictions were in effect for three weekends. Students were required to move their cars so that spaces could be made available for guests, which unintentionally sends a message to students about how the College is prioritizing space. (See attached illustration email.)

Several times in the past few years, an attempt has been made via working groups to locate spaces for additional parking. Each spot has drawbacks due to existing usage. The easiest spots to add would be on South Campus and would impinge on faculty and staff housing or on athletic fields. Other parking could be located at Glen Rowan or in the vacant lot at the corner of College and Sheridan; these locations would potentially clash with the City. We note that the City has already specified that the additional asphaltting behind North Hall was done without an analysis of adequate permeable surfaces.

Recommendation: The parking situation is serious enough that the College must address it fairly quickly, knowing that any available space will have other claims, and the decision of location will not be easy.

In addition to parking availability, there are issues with adequate asphalt repair and striping due to budget pressures. The students pay \$170,000 in parking permits annually, but that full amount is not returned into the maintenance of the lots. Currently, we do not require faculty and staff to pay for parking permits.

Recommendation: Funds should be set aside on a regular basis to provide safe parking lots.

II. BUILDING COMMUNITY

The committee engaged in robust discussion about the commitments we must make – as a residential college – to a vibrant on-campus community. We believe that the nature of our college requires us to invest in the educational, social, and personal development of our students outside of the classroom, with a focus on the dynamics of a residential community. We noted that this is important even for our commuting students, who have chosen a residential liberal arts college when they have many other options in the Chicago-land area.

Recent student surveys indicate that students don't necessarily feel a strong sense of community in the residence halls. In 2019, only 28.5% of respondents to the All-Campus Student Survey agreed or strongly agreed that "there is a strong sense of community in my residence hall." In the 2022 version of the survey, this percentage of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with that statement fell further to 20.91%, which is perhaps partially attributable to the safety precautions that prohibited gathering and connecting in person during the

pandemic. We find these survey outcomes dramatic and in need of immediate attention.

This focus on building community can seem at odds with the student population that is craving privacy in single rooms and aren't necessarily engaging in communal spaces. However, discussions need to continue about the kind of college that we want to be. As educators inside and outside of the classroom, we can prioritize what we know is good, healthy, and helpful for our students' development. And, we know that creating a sense of belonging on campus will help students persist through the typical obstacles that they will face as emerging adults in college. A fantastic residential experience would cement affinity for the college and likely increase alumni engagement and donation.

Priority Recommendation: Rally the relevant campus departments around building community in the coming year(s), especially as we seek to revivify the campus after a pandemic kept us apart.

Key Questions:

1. How can staffing in Residence Life be maximized to improve community?

The office of Residence Life has been affected by turnover that is not uncommon for departments such as these, especially once the pandemic began and Residence Life responsibilities changed dramatically. Like many institutions, we are also affected by The Great Resignation. In the last four years (2018-2022) the department was led by four different Directors; the longest-tenured Residence Director stayed for 2.5 years and others were promoted to leadership positions, but some RDs stayed for fewer than 12 months. In those years, the department had only brief spans of time where it was fully staffed, which increases burnout among the remaining staff as they take on more responsibilities (especially when the role includes a 24/7 on-call rotation).

Staff turnover affects many elements of the important work of building community in the residence halls. Ongoing relationships with students can falter, time is lost to hiring and onboarding processes, institutional and departmental memories suffer, collaborations around campus are difficult to keep consistent, and forward progress is difficult. The committee notes, however, that many individual Residence Life staff have been wonderful contributors to our community and have created meaningful relationships with students and colleagues. It's just that the cumulative effect of turnover has a ripple effect.

At this writing, the College is seeking our next Director of Residence Life, who will be charged with leading efforts to invest in the staff's professional development, create a programmatic curriculum for the residence halls, refresh the Resident Assistant (RA) program, join campus efforts to reinvigorate campus community, and move the needle on student impressions of the community in the residence halls. Both returning and new RD staff will experience an optimistic reset of the department this summer.

Resident Assistants (RAs) are critically important in setting the stage for healthy communities. At this writing, the College is also responding to student requests to increase wages – including from the RA population – and a task force convened to address these concerns. More discussion of the RA program can be found below.

Recommendation: Analyze the fiscal resources that are necessary to secure the right people – and give them the resources that they need – to build community.

2. What will it take to build community in our residential program?

It's clear that collective attention from staff in Residence Life, Student Affairs, and campus partners must be focused on how to increase the student sense of community and belonging for both our residential and commuting students. We discussed several ideas – all of which require time and financial resources – but are worth exploring further by the relevant staff in coming months and years.

As examples only:

- The College could consider repurposing a centrally-located house (7 Campus Circle?) as a middle-campus kitchen and gathering space for commuters. Committee members noted other liberal arts colleges have student kitchens or themed houses (cookie house!) that are institutional points of pride.
- We could offer meditation and prayer space in the residence halls or in the student center. These practices are sometimes individual, but are often communal activities too.
- We noted the need for a creative program to 're-socialize' students this fall, with a focus on fun, energetic connections with others that enhance the student experience.

Committee members were concerned that these efforts might be complicated by a generation of students who – due to the COVID-19 pandemic – have been socialized differently than their forebears. In Fall

2022 and beyond, our students may need more thorough information about campus programs and traditions, and how to plan events and engage with peers.

We also noted the need for better gathering space for commuters. The existing commuter lounge in the lower level of Deerpath is large, with comfortable seating and modest appointments, but it is not centrally located. Perhaps commuting students could be assigned to join certain residential communities to broaden their social connections and access to spaces on campus.

Both the Residence Directors (RDs) and the Resident Assistants (RAs) are asked to spend a notable amount of their time and energy on building community on the floor and across the residence hall. This can feel at odds, on occasion, with the accountability measures that the RDs and RAs must take to ensure the community's standards are upheld. Some committee members felt that confronting policy violations makes it difficult for RAs to be seen as builders of community; other committee members felt that holding the community accountable is good for the overall health of the community itself.

Currently the operational budget for programming in the residence halls is too low at approximately \$10,000 annually. This amounts to \$2,500 per RD, or \$250 per RA, or \$8 per resident each year. Of course, other campus entities like the Gates Center, Intercultural Relations, Student Government, and student clubs contribute to campus community through their own programming budgets.

Recommendation: Empower Residence Life and other campus departments to experiment with low-budget projects that may develop into community-building traditions.

Recommendation: Assess the space in Mohr Student Center for a commuter lounge and prayer/meditation space.

3. What kind of spaces create community?

Over time, small residential lounges originally planned for TVs or studying were reclaimed for bedroom space. This leaves only the larger, public "entryway lounges" for communal space in most buildings. Some of these are in good to excellent shape (Moore, Nollen, Deerpath) but others are unattractive with mismatched and uncomfortable furniture. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, few buildings have kitchens, which further limits student interaction and connection. We found it noteworthy that students

mentioned the outdoor tents and picnic tables as gathering places that are addressing that need, at least partially.

Recommendation: Include residence hall furniture replacement in residence hall master planning. Capitalize on any donor interest or surpluses to make modest improvements to shared residential spaces whenever possible.

Recommendation: Create more communal spaces by converting some bedrooms to shared lounge or cooking space, despite a marginal revenue loss.

III. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Housing is an auxiliary business and is expected to “pay its own way”. Yet we also know that a residential program is not easily separated from the educational experience at a college like Lake Forest. We looked at the financial outcomes from room and board and discovered two very important points. First, the fees that students pay for room and board barely cover the costs of providing these services when we take into account the additional need-based aid that is awarded. Second, some significant number of our students still have difficulty affording room and board despite the additional aid, because even with institutional grants of \$35,000 and full federal and state support, their financial aid package falls short of need by about \$7,500. We also heard concerns that the existing meal plan does not provide food during breaks, and that some students cannot afford to get food off campus during those times.

Priority Recommendation: Review and solidify a financial plan for housing and food that balances student financial need and possible food insecurity with the realistic need for College revenue.

Key Questions:

1. Does the residential program make money?

Room and Board charges are \$11,500 in FY22 for the least expensive room type. Total revenue as shown on the financial statements is \$14 million. In contrast, the net tuition revenue was only \$27 million, making it appear that the College is very dependent upon room and board revenue. This is because almost all of the Lake Forest scholarships and need-based grants have been applied against tuition and fees.

The College contracts out for the dining plan and pays Parkhurst for the meals. Financial Aid packages about \$4,000 of additional College grant aid for students living on campus who have unmet need. The average across all residential students in FY19 (pre-pandemic) was \$2,846 in additional aid per resident. Starting with \$14 million billed for room and board, subtracting Parkhurst fees, and subtracting the additional grants, the remaining revenue was \$4.3 million or about \$3,900 per residential student. Against that revenue is allocated direct repairs, custodial, facilities management, utilities, interest paid on debt for past renovations, and the residence life staff and programming. The net revenue remaining was only \$507,000, which is not enough to pay for needed annual refurbishment, let alone major capital repairs to roofs, HVAC, or electrical systems.

Since we established earlier that many of our applicants are looking for a residential campus, the residential program is not a stand-alone offering that can be evaluated on profitability. However, we have also established a clearer understanding of the costs of the program through this analysis.

Recommendation: Provide more transparency in financial aid packaging, so that the net revenue for room and board is apparent.

2. How can the College afford to update the residence halls?

According to a report commissioned by the College to review Facilities Management, a rule of thumb for annual spending on capital renewal would be 1.5% of the current replacement value. Using their number of \$350 per GSF on 310,000 GSF, the replacement value of the residence halls would be \$108.5 million; the annual capital renewal goal would be \$1.6 million. The current capital renewal budget has been \$400,000 - \$600,000 for the *campus*, and not all for residence halls. Given the analysis in Question 1 above, the capital renewal budget is unlikely to come from student revenue.

The College will be incurring debt this summer to accomplish major renovations in Harlan and Blackstone. The buildings will get all new plumbing, heating and ventilation systems.

Per current plans, the next residence halls to be given a major renovation would be the "quads" of Gregory, Roberts, and McClure. The committee discussed the popularity of the Nollen renovation which transformed the original building (which was of the same design as Gregory, Roberts and McClure) to a much more popular configuration that enclosed the center

between the wings and removed the external “motel” entrances. Multiple room types and air conditioning were also added, and the gross square footage went from 28,000 to 39,000, and the number of available beds went from 120 to 154. The estimated cost, based on figures above, to replace the three existing quads would be \$10 million each. The cost to “Nollenize” one of the quads would be \$13.7 million. Both numbers may be low based on Chicago-area prices.

If the College were to expand substantially beyond the current enrollment, and applicants required on campus housing, then increasing the number of beds by renovating the quads might be considered important. Rough calculation shows that \$13 million debt at 5% interest rate over 30 years would increase the annual debt service by \$850,000 per year. 34 additional residents (154-120) would bring in only \$132,600 in annual housing revenue, but also additional net tuition revenue. Given the decline in the number of college-going students starting in 2026, this might not be the right time to consider expansion. But, our trend of full-to-bursting residence halls do require some creative solutions if our enrollment stays healthy in the meantime.

Recommendation: Prepare a long-range financial plan to fund residence hall renovations.

3. Can students afford our room and board?

Room and board fees are part of the total cost of attendance (COA), and students' financial aid packages are based on COA. The College is extremely generous with institutional grants but is not in a financial position to cover full need. Many of the neediest local students are choosing to live at home and commute. They will save \$7,500 (the balance of what they would have paid living on campus with additional aid). Against this, the commuter will need to incur transportation and food costs.

The students who have chosen to live on campus *and* have a zero expected family contribution (EFC) will need to find additional loans or work to pay for the outstanding \$7,500. In the entering First Year class of Fall 2022, the commuter population is 48% Pell recipients, compared to 28% of the resident population. This indicates a skewing of our population in housing choice by family resources.

Some students have petitioned to waive the Board Plan to save money. Currently the College requires students to remain on the Board Plan unless a medical exemption is given. This is primarily because of the lack of cooking facilities in the residence halls. We also note that keeping more

students on the meal plan makes the plan more affordable on average, and mitigates any food insecurity during the academic year.

Off-campus apartments are spread around the surrounding areas of Highland Park, Highwood, Vernon Hills, North Chicago, Lake Bluff, and Waukegan. They are not clustered to create community and the town of Lake Forest has few housing opportunities. Apartment rent for 2 bedrooms and 1 bath ranges from \$1,350 in Vernon Hills to \$2,200 at Arrive (billed as luxury) in Highwood. At \$1,800 per month, *double occupancy* bedrooms, the 12-month cost unfurnished would be \$5,400 for the year plus utilities and wifi, making the cost similar to the College's lowest cost of \$5,540 for two semesters. At least one group of students has found a 4 bedroom (4 person) house for \$2,650/month, or \$7,950 per person for the year, which is similar to the College's price for air-conditioned suites.

Students who cannot go home over breaks face additional costs for housing (between semesters) and food (not currently provided during Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks).

Recommendation: Provide meals during winter and spring breaks and include them in the meal plan.

4. How does differential pricing impact equity on campus?

Currently rooms are priced higher for air conditioning, singles, and spaces in newer residence halls. The two-semester cost (for housing only) for FY22 ranges from \$5,540 to \$8,738. Some students are mindful of cost and choose accommodations that are within budget, although not their preference. Some students pay no attention to cost and select nicer residence halls that lead them to incur financial hardship; the most frequent financial appeal according to the Financial Aid office is from students who have chosen to live in more expensive rooms.

In our discussions, we were not agreed on the question of College approach: should all rooms be priced the same and the best rooms given to students with more seniority, or should pricing reflect amenities and lower pricing be made available to students with fewer financial resources? We have shown that even at the lowest prices, some students are finding room and board to be not affordable.

Recommendation: Develop a mission for the residence life program that weighs the affordability and equity issues.

5. What is the financial role of summer programs that utilize the residence halls?

The College has a strong summer rental program, which brings in week-long camps and conferences to live in the residence halls. These renters will also usually purchase meals from the College's meal plan provider, Parkhurst. The summer meal plan revenue helps offset the cost of the academic year meal plan.

In the summer of 2019 (the last full pre-pandemic summer), the College netted \$270,000 from these rentals. The College also contracted for \$45,000 of additional custodial help to get the halls ready before and after rentals, making net revenue \$225,000. In the summer of 2021, with students present on campus in the spring but few rentals in the summer, the College incurred no additional summer custodial charges. We are not able to identify or analyze specific costs for repairs due to summer wear and tear since the College work-order system does not collect this information.

The College also rents residence hall space to students in the summer. Some of these students are attending summer school or researching with faculty, some are working on campus or at internships, and a small number are given permission because they lack other suitable options. Summer rent from students was \$158,000 for the fiscal year FY19 (June, July of 2018 and May of 2019). Students are given air-conditioned halls, with Moore Hall being most often used. Since Moore Hall is always full (because other air-conditioned halls are reserved for rental, and because the College does not mix outside renters with students), there is no time to do preventative maintenance repairs. Other halls have periods of weeks open during the summer but the rentals are heavily loaded in July and end by July 31. About 50 students who are remaining on campus throughout the summer transition to their actual fall rooms five days later; 42 RAs and 100 football players return to campus within 7 days of rentals leaving.

CONCLUSION

The Residential Planning group feels it likely that we generated more questions than we answered. To be sure, the questions we have identified are complicated, have expensive ramifications, and are deeply intersecting with the work of our academic, enrollment, partnership, and diversity/equity/inclusion counterparts in the planning process. We could not,

alone, make a prediction about whether the students of our near-term future will want to live on campus at greater or lesser rates, just as we could not, alone, identify how to prioritize the millions of dollars of deferred maintenance in the residence halls.

As you have read, this report outlines three priority recommendations for the coming years:

1) Develop a Facility Master Plan that will outline the needed renovations to the residence halls and address the parking situation.

- In the near-term, a facilities assessment could be requested by an external party that would help ready us for campus master planning process. Furthermore, the campus parking shortage may need a remedy before the master planning process can be completed, and flexible solutions for additional residential beds may be needed if enrollment continues to grow.

2) Rally the relevant campus departments around building community in the coming year(s), especially as we seek to revivify the campus after a pandemic kept us apart.

- In the near-term, Student Affairs plans to devote significant energy in Fall 2022 towards efforts to reengage our student body. Additionally, more data could be gathered about the unique needs of our commuting students.

3) Review and solidify a financial plan for housing and food that balances student financial need and possible food insecurity with the realistic need for College revenue.

- In the near-term, a decision must be made about the differential pricing for campus housing and the financial aid protocols for room and board.

The members of the Residential Planning group look forward to further campus deliberations about the preservation and advancement of the residential nature of our liberal arts college in years to come.

**Partnership Planning Group
Final Report
22 April 2022**

Planning Group Members

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I. Preface

The Partnership Planning Group met monthly from November 2021 to April 2022, where we considered the following key questions:

- What goals can partnerships help us accomplish?
- Who are our current partners, and should we expand any of these relationships?
- How do we identify, prioritize, and develop future partnerships?
- What makes a partnership successful and how do we ensure its success?
- How do we effectively maintain and keep track of our partnerships?

Based on these conversations, our interim report in February 2022 identified three important goals:

1. Identifying (and defining) key external partnership opportunities for the College and developing strategies to pursue and enhance them.
2. Improving campus communication and collaboration surrounding campus partners and partnerships - as well as developing systems to ensure there is "shared institutional knowledge."
3. Developing systems of accountability for partnership relationship management, campus communication, and stewardship.

Throughout our work, it has become clear that external partnerships are great resources for the College that can accomplish many goals (e.g., academic, enrollment, philanthropic, and workforce) and help us fulfill the College's mission. If tapped more fully, these partnerships could further enhance the reputation of the College and differentiate us in the marketplace, as well as enrich our offerings in novel, efficient ways.

Further, there is tremendous excitement and energy around partnerships, as well as a collaborative community spirit that will serve the College well in development efforts now and in the future. Despite this enthusiasm, there are challenges to overcome. For instance, our processes for partnerships are ill-defined, communication is siloed, information is not centralized or easily accessible, and stewardship and marketing responsibilities are not clear. If we are to achieve our strategic partnership goals, new resources and organization will be required so that we can effectively maintain, develop, and communicate with our external partners.

II. Structure of the Report

- The report begins with a brief list of our key recommendations, which are described in detail later in the document, but highlighted in this first section.
- The report continues with key questions (and some answers), which provide contextual details that helped to inform our recommendations.
- The report concludes with detailed descriptions of our key recommendations.

III. Key Recommendations

1. Expand Partnerships both *In the Forest* and *In the Loop*
2. Expand Partnerships in the *Health Professions*
3. Expand Partnerships by Forming a *Non-Profit Center of Excellence* at the College
4. Strengthen *Enrollment Partnerships*
5. Hire a Full-Time Staff Member to *Lead Partnership Initiatives*

IV. Key Questions (& Some Answers)

1. What goals can partnerships help us accomplish?

Our planning group identified that partnerships can accomplish four key goals—academic, enrollment, philanthropic, and workforce. That is, partnerships can help us to:

- Provide our diverse population of students with academic experiences that augment our traditional liberal arts curriculum and elevate student-centered experiential education (e.g., pathway partnerships for health professions, law, etc.).
- Ensure equitable access to meaningful internship experiences and post-graduate employment opportunities.
- Continue to increase enrollment at the College.
- Raise funds for college initiatives and student support.

Whereas some partnerships might address a single goal, others might accomplish many goals. All partnerships are important in unique ways, but those that serve College-wide goals, align with our mission, and address multiple goals should be prioritized.

2. Who are our current partners, and should we expand any of these relationships? How do we identify, prioritize, and develop future partnerships?

In December 2021, we circulated a campus wide partnership inventory, which helped us identify over 200 existing and future partnerships. Given the high volume of partnerships, our committee identified a short list of partners that might provide key strategic external opportunities for the College, both in the near and long term. The committee quickly recognized that alumni are key contributors to many of our current partnerships, and although progress has been made in several areas, there exists enormous untapped potential.

Our planning group then split into four separate working groups and evaluated these partnerships according to the four key goals identified early (academic, enrollment, philanthropy, workforce), as well on the current benefits and future opportunities for these selected partners.

The Committee created a database to house the College's partners. The Partnership Inventory [linked here](#) includes names of all partners that were identified. Those with an * have completed profiles and this [link](#) provides a snapshot of the information our committee was able to obtain in the timeframe of our work. The database is ready for future information to be added.

An audit of existing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) was also conducted and [linked here](#) for reference.

3. What makes a partnership successful and how do we ensure its success?

The next important step for our committee was to consider what makes a partnership successful. A good partnership must be mutually beneficial to both partners, and it might include a combination of other ingredients, such as: mission alignment, the presence of alumni (especially alumni decision-makers), proximity/locality, variety of opportunities, and connections to other partners. As a helpful exercise, we developed a brief case study of our existing (and growing) partnership with Horizon Therapeutics [linked here](#). This exercise not only helped us to better define the keys to a successful relationship, but it helped us evaluate current partnerships and prioritize future opportunities.

4. How do we effectively maintain and keep track of our partnerships?

To ensure successful long-term partnerships, we will need to establish plans for relationship management, stewardship, communication, and publicity. If we are to truly make progress on key College-wide partnerships, we must hire a dedicated full-time staff member who will assume campus leadership and communication for partnerships. We also must recognize that, even with such a leader, these partnerships will require the efforts of teams of individuals across campus.

Critical to these goals of effective communication and stewardship, we developed a profile in our Slate database for partnerships. Profiles for our partners have been established in Slate, but these will require continued maintenance and updating so that we can better realize our goal of shared institutional knowledge.

V. Priority Recommendations

It became clear in our discussions that we needed to establish some initial prioritization and organization of our partnerships. We decided to focus first on larger partnerships that could serve multiple College-wide goals, specifically as they relate to academics, enrollment, philanthropy, and workforce. We also considered the uniqueness of these relationships, noting that certain partnerships could further distinguish the College from our competitors and provide unique opportunities for our students. Throughout the process, five key themes emerged, which formed the basis for our five priority recommendations below.

For each priority recommendation, we provide a brief description of the goal (with necessary background information), some potential avenues for further exploration, and a sample of relevant partnerships. Our goal was to demonstrate that there are some clear potential paths forward, but without being overly prescriptive or rigid to ensure flexibility in future planning.

1. Expand Partnerships both *In the Forest* and *In the Loop*.

Goal:

The College should strategically enhance the College's footprint through further development, expansion, and marketing of key partnerships in Lake Forest, in Chicago, and in our nearby communities. We need to take better advantage of our proximity to select organizations and companies that are valuable to students' education and career goals, and in turn, align ourselves closely with organizations and companies that want to work with and employ our students. We also need to look more carefully at and widen our lens on funding and philanthropic opportunities for the benefit of our students and sustainability of the College.

Potential Avenues:

- Explore pathway partnerships with other academic institutions so that students, across the disciplines, have access to attractive pathways (e.g., Columbia College; Illinois Institute of Technology; Graduate program partnerships; Accelerated partnerships).
- Expand internship and early career employment opportunities at key companies and organizations. The Career Advancement Center's current employer targets are [linked here](#).
- Develop hiring pipelines and relationships to ensure placement for our increasingly diverse population of students and open doors for internships and funding.
- Enhance academic and internship programs In the Loop. Further information on In The Loop program partners is [linked here](#).
- Seek opportunities from partners, alumni, donors, and community members to fund student internships.
- Expand marketing efforts of these initiatives to ensure top partnerships are well known to both our internal community and external audiences.

Sample Partners:

- Columbia College of Chicago
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- In the Loop Program Partners
- Horizon Therapeutics
- CDW
- Goldman Sachs/Ayco
- Mellon Foundation
- North Chicago Community Partners
- Starcom

2. Expand Partnerships in the *Health Professions*

Goal: The College should continue to build partnerships to align with the College's new Health Professions Program (HPP), which is a unique partnership with Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (RFUMS) that prepares students early in their academic career for a variety of professions in healthcare. By Fall 2024, we expect nearly 400 students will be enrolled in HPP. Whereas some of our students will matriculate to RFUMS, others will continue their studies elsewhere. We need to quickly expand and enhance partnerships (e.g., internships,

enrollment/hiring pipelines, etc.) that focus on the growing healthcare industry to support this growing population of students.

Potential Avenues:

- Ensure we meet their academic needs and interests (e.g., MD, DO, dental, veterinary, pharmacy, optometry), and expand the array of possible professions in the health industry that our students consider and that we can support.
- Increase internship and early career employment opportunities across all health professions to meet supply and demand (e.g., research, shadowing, nursing).
- Develop unique hiring pipelines and relationships to ensure placement and open doors for internships and funding.
- Expand faculty level collaborations in joint research, grant acquisition, shared equipment, and student training.

Sample Partners:

- Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science
- Rush University Medical Center
- Shirley Ryan Ability Lab
- Midwestern University
- Horizon Therapeutics
- Abbott and AbbVie
- Medline
- Northwestern Medicine
- North Shore University Health System

3. Expand Partnerships by Forming a *Non-Profit Center of Excellence* at the College

Goal: The College should become a partnership hub for the non-profit industry (especially for non-profits in Lake County) and create new opportunities for community service, career related engagement, and philanthropy. Our location and program offerings afford us unique opportunities in this regard, and we see this as a new and important consideration for the College.

Potential Avenues:

- Support and expand existing coursework and experiences that relate to non-profits. The College already offers courses in Non-Profit Sales & Fundraising (ENTP 220), Non-Profit Leadership Management (ENTP 255), and Inclusive Innovation (ENTP 340). Our Venture Design Challenge already has a social impact track. The College also offers minors in Social Justice and Public Policy.
- Become a resource for non-profit institutions which may include community service engagement and class or student projects. The College can leverage its James Rocco Quantitative Data Research Scholarship Program to help support non-profit institution data analysis needs.
- Grow our non-profit network, which will lead to more internships, hands-on work experiences, and post-graduation employment for our students who are interested in the non-profit industry.

- Seek opportunities from partners to fund student internships at non-profit institutions (which typically cannot pay for interns themselves).
- Expand our Federal Work-Study program with partners (e.g., North Chicago Community Partners where students are paid to be reading tutors to younger children in the community).
- Leverage our corporate partners' community service connections.

Sample Partners:

- North Chicago Community Partners
- Lake County Partners
- Waukegan to College
- Horizon Therapeutics
- Schuler Scholars
- Chicago Botanic Garden
- Ravinia
- Boys and Girls Club
- Gorton Community Center
- Projects for Peace

4. Strengthen *Enrollment Partnerships*

Goal: The College should ensure that we strengthen current enrollment partnerships, and that the College continues to keep an eye on future enrollment related opportunities. This is especially important given expected demographic trends that are not favorable for future enrollment at colleges and universities across the country.

Potential Avenues:

- Support our partnership with the Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program. Each year, the College welcomes over 50 Davis Scholars to campus from nearly 45 countries. Starting with the Class of 2025, the College will receive \$40,000 per student each year from the program for need-based scholarship support.
- Support our partnerships with local community colleges, which send roughly 100 students per year to the College (with nearly one-third coming from the College of Lake County).
- Ensure that our current programs and new partnerships continue to be attractive to and meet the needs of these students.

Sample Partners:

- Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program
- Schuler Scholars
- College of Lake County
- Harper College
- Oakton Community College
- Chicago City Colleges
- Chicago Public Schools
- High Schools across Lake County

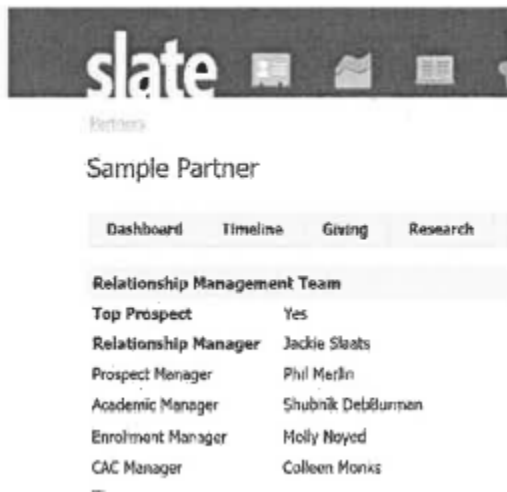
5. Hire a Full-Time Staff Member to *Lead Partnership Initiatives*

Goal: If we are to truly make progress on key College-wide partnerships, we must hire a dedicated full-time staff member who will assume campus leadership and communication for partnerships by:

- Promoting partnerships with business and industry to help identify and develop programs in existing and emerging career areas.
- Providing guidance and support to faculty and staff on how they can contribute to partnerships.
- Serving as a campus resource for opportunities identified in which a specific partner or type of partner would help reach the desired outcome.
- Working collaboratively with our partners to develop shared goals and strategic objectives and invest in partnership activities for mission success.
- Marketing key partnerships on our website and ensure external and internal audiences are aware of the College's current strategic partners.
- Maintaining the partnership database and update pertinent interactions and changes to the relationship and adding new campus partners when needed.
- Identifying relationship managers for the partners in the Slate system and informing these individuals of their responsibilities.
- Reviewing current partnership briefs housed in Slate for future opportunities.
- Facilitating meetings with key members of the College community to determine what is necessary to advance a partnership target and providing support to make these opportunities a reality.
- Providing stewardship to our partners in ways meaningful to them (e.g., recruitment, mentorship, etc.).

In addition, the College will need a team comprised of faculty and staff across campus that have defined responsibility for communication, marketing, and stewardship of key external campus partnerships if we are to truly make them key College wide partnerships.

It would be ideal to have every key strategic partnership to have a sector manager. As an example:



VI. Conclusion

The Partnership Planning Group is pleased by the progress our committee has made in establishing the foundation for partnership development and expansion, but most excited about the potential that lies ahead. We look forward to continued collaboration on our five priority recommendations. We are thankful to all who provided feedback and are inspired by the energy and passion within our community. Our ability to be strategic, nimble, and rally around the needs of our students will continue to be an important trademark of the College, and one we are confident that our partners will appreciate.

Summary

Enrollment planning group discussions were guided by three questions:

1. What should be Lake Forest's enrollment priorities?
2. What strategic initiatives will help advance these priorities?
3. What are the potential impacts, costs, and other considerations associated with these initiatives?

The committee learned about Lake Forest's history of enrollment planning and challenges to increasing headcount and average net tuition revenue, or ANTR (see Appendix A). From 2006-2020 ANTR has been largely flat. This has been a national trend, except for highly selective institutions. In 2021 and 2022 Lake Forest's ANTR was higher, largely due to increased funding from the Davis Foundation for United World College (UWC) students, in recognition of the significant number served by the College.

Regarding headcount, Lake Forest has bucked discouraging enrollment trends. According to the Council of Independent Colleges' Key Indicators, Lake Forest's first-year enrollment change from Fall 2016 to Fall 2020 was 8.1%, significantly higher than the national median of -12.4% and Midwest median of -11.2%. The College's entering classes have been climbing steadily each of the last five years, from 422 first years and transfers in 2017 to last fall's class of 519 first years and transfers. This trend will continue in 2022 given a record number of first year deposits; Lake Forest was among three ACM institutions out of 14 to receive more first year deposits on May 2 than the prior year. Transfer enrollment, almost double any other ACM institution, has grown to more than 90 students. In addition, 30 plus students have enrolled for the spring semester.

The College has achieved this growth by improving its brand in the Chicago area; developing key pipelines through partnerships with community colleges, United World Colleges, and a Health Professions Program with Rosalind Franklin University; and adding men's and women's lacrosse.

While Lake Forest has been successful in growing headcount and total revenue, demographic and competitor challenges will only become greater in decades ahead. A shrinking percentage of high school graduates from 2026-2037, especially in Illinois (-21%) and the Midwest (-14%), will put tremendous pressure on net price and ANTR as colleges competitively bid on students' enrollment. Lake Forest is also committed to serving a socioeconomically diverse population, including roughly 30% Pell-eligible students who can make a minimal contribution towards educational costs.

To ensure the College's financial sustainability, the enrollment planning group determined that increasing total revenue remains the priority and that there are fewer headwinds to increasing headcount—or protecting market share—than ANTR. The committee discussed various growth options, including expanding existing cohorts, introducing new academic or athletic cohorts, and enhancing selected College offerings. Among these, nine options are provided (Figure 1).

Enrollment Growth Options

The committee discussed initiatives that have helped grow enrollment to date, related alternatives, and their perceived cost and impact (net addition of students). Ideas not put forward included adding

kinesiology and baseball, expanding entrepreneurship, and considering distance learning. Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution was deemed valuable, with less certainty about significant federal funding than as an imperative to better serve our community. With demographic trends and current recruitment strategies, meeting the 25% requirement for full-time enrollment will become a reality in years ahead, as evidenced by 26% of Fall 2022 first year deposits being Latinx.

The following growth options in the chart, with varied timelines and potential returns on investment, were deemed of interest. Brief considerations for each follow (needed support, interdependencies with other planning areas).

Figure 1. Nine Proposed Options for Increasing Headcount

Initiative	Impact	Cost	Timeframe
Nursing	Green	Green	Green
UWC	Green	Yellow	Green
Branding Internships	Yellow	Green	Green
Performance Groups	Green	Yellow	Yellow
E-Sports	Green	Yellow	Yellow
DEI Certification	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Cybersecurity	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Special Education	Green	Red	Red
Redesigning FIYS	Green	Red	Red

Green = High	Green = Low	Green = Short Term
Yellow = Medium	Yellow = Medium	Yellow = Intermediate Term
Red = Low	Red = High	Red = Long Term

Short-Term Options: Maximizing Current Cohorts or Offerings

- **Nursing:** seek to enroll 25-30 first year and transfer students annually—within several years of HLC’s approval of Rosalind Franklin’s nursing program.
 - This dual-degree program with RFU will help provide social mobility for local students interested in giving back to the community.
 - Admissions received 240 applications for Fall 2022 from students interested in nursing. The vast majority of applicants were underrepresented students from the area, a higher percentage interested in commuting to save costs.
 - Marketing, Community Partnerships, and high school outreach programs will be key in meeting program goals.
 - Academic and advising support provided by the Nursing Pathway Program Committee and Center for Academic Success will be key for retention goals. Students will represent multiple areas of major.
 - Cost includes additional faculty and course support.

- **UWC Students:** project 5-10 more students annually for a total of 65-70 per class.
 - Lake Forest has an excellent reputation among UWC schools, currently enrolling the highest percentage of UWC students per full-time enrollment of any college in the country. UWC students are strong academically and help support the financial well-being of the College.
 - Admissions will need to travel to select UWC campuses and host a UWC high school counselor visit program to protect market share. Competition from colleges has increased significantly given the Davis Foundation's more generous funding model.
 - Student Affairs will need support as they meet the needs of UWC students given recent and proposed growth (e.g., I-20 processing, counseling, post-graduate employment).
 - UWC students would benefit from guaranteed housing and meals during student breaks and an emergency fund for those with limited family support.

- **Branding Internships:** market internships with high-profile employer partners to remain competitive with other colleges' offerings.
 - Families have greater expectations for internships. The Career Advancement Center and the Partnerships Committee identified three to five Tier 1 partners in each pathway, those employers with a commitment to bringing on Lake Forest interns.
 - The Office of Communications and Marketing (OCM) and Admissions can promote students' internships with these partners. These will be great examples of the "Make It" brand.
 - Minimal costs include marketing and possibly funding selected internships with Tier 1 partners.

Intermediate Options: New Cohorts

- **Competitive Cheer, Poms, Dance:** would provide net student adds, 10-12 in one offering first year, 30-36 with the full complement.
 - Dance would attract Chicago-area students; cheer would attract students in growth markets out-of-state.
 - Small scholarships, as with the fine arts, would help with recruitment and yield. These offerings would be part of an existing financial aid package and not lower ANTR.
 - Three groups would require an investment of 1.5 coaches.
 - These performance groups would add to campus vibrancy.

- **E-sports:** net adds will be based on the number of teams or sports.
 - E-sports has been a popular addition at colleges.
 - Option of club or varsity would have to be evaluated.
 - Cost would include equipment, a room, and one paid administrator overseeing the program and recruiting—supported by student volunteer coaches for each team.
 - The administrator and small scholarships will help create and reinforce a strong culture. Scholarships underwrite existing financial aid funding, not to lower ANTR. Sport participation and scholarship renewal would be tied to a student's cumulative GPA.
 - Developing e-sports could extend to summer programming and additional revenue.
 - Net adds tend to skew male and STEM.

- **DEI Certificate Program:** can meet a need of area employees and strengthen employer relationships, while providing an educational offering that aligns with our institutional mission and core values.
 - This certificate could pull from a number of pre-existing courses across the curriculum.

- Courses would need to be taught in the evenings or on weekends. Virtual offerings could also be considered.
 - Appropriate faculty committees would need to approve such a program, including how to administer and allocate resources.
 - Should we need growth outside of our traditional market, this certificate program could become a model for other certificates that meet adult learners' needs (e.g., leadership) and highlight the College's offerings, strengths, and values.
- **Cybersecurity:** provides a boutique offering that can enhance student recruitment and outcomes.
 - Admissions will survey student interest and assess the potential effect on yield; 114 more students applied with computer science as an academic interest in Fall 2022.
 - Low cost and implementation depend upon a faculty member's interest and the development of several courses.
 - A concentration, which would be advantageous for admissions marketing and recruitment, would require appropriate academic approvals.

Long-term Options: Longer-Lead Programs and Institutional Branding

- **Education Department Offerings:** these students would be net adds for the College.
 - Admissions sees a growth opportunity from students interested in Education.
 - Potential areas of growth include Special Education, Early Childhood Education, ESL, Bilingual, and Educational Studies. Each one has a different appeal and levels of investment.
 - The Education Department would need to assess which direction(s) would offer the best return on investment based on prospective student interest, current curricular offerings and infrastructure (Education as well as other majors), curricular additions, and job demand.
 - The cost would be a full-time position(s) and curricular development.
- **Redesigning First Year Studies (FIYS):** create a new FIYS program around a common theme that differentiates Lake Forest.
 - A new offering must continue to provide skills essential to a student's transition and academic development.
 - A common theme could be threaded through four years. By maintaining their cohort, students would have a greater sense of belonging, social identity, and academic purpose.
 - A signature offering would provide an exciting branding and marketing opportunity, especially within our overarching "Make It" brand, that could help influence students to choose Lake Forest.
 - Creating a new FIYS would be a long-term academic planning endeavor.

Committee Members

Faculty Members

- Cassondra Batz-Barbarich: Assistant Professor of Business
- Jason Cody: Professor of Chemistry, Co-Chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Enrique Trevino: Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science
- Ben Zeller: Associate Professor of Religion, Chair of Religion, Chair of Islamic World Studies

Staff Members

- Jim Catanzaro: Head Football Coach
- Mike Cohen: Senior Director of Admissions and Strategic Planning
- Chris Ellertson: Vice President of Enrollment
- Erin Hoffman: Associate Dean of Students
- Lori Sundberg: Vice President for Finance and Planning

Trustees

- Marisue Lacher
- Martino Moore
- Steve Strelsin

Appendix A:

Enrollment Strategic Planning

Lori Sundberg, Vice President for Finance and Planning, shared highlights from four strategic planning efforts, from 2003 to 2013, focused on growing enrollment and ANTR. Ambitious headcount and ANTR goals were moderated over time. Progress was made in headcount, as the College grew from 1,325 students in 2003 to 1,657 students in 2021. ANTR remained largely flat since the 2008-09 recession. The first-year retention goal of 87% was met, and the graduation rate improved to 75%.

The Enrollment Landscape

Paul Hamborg, who serves as an enrollment consultant for over 50 colleges and has worked with Lake Forest for seven years, provided the following context on enrollment challenges and pressures:

- Enrollment goals can be in conflict with each other—headcount, ANTR, academic profile, low-income, racial diversity—requiring institutions to clearly define its one or two priorities.
- Families have diminished ability and willingness to pay for higher education costs.
 - Nationwide, 41% of the families of 17-year olds have an income below \$50,000, while only 4% have an income over \$250,000.
 - Lake Forest serves a high percentage of low-income students given its local population in Lake County and Chicago. Among 24 top cross-applicant schools, the College is 7th in enrolling Pell-eligible students.
- ANTR has remained largely flat for colleges from 2006-2019, with the exception of highly selective private and public institutions.
 - ANTR grew by \$2,239 over 12 years for selective privates, Lake Forest's category, and \$2,500 for selective publics.
 - Lake Forest's ANTR is several thousand dollars higher than other selective private colleges' average ANTR. In addition, among 24 top competitors, the College ranks 10th in ANTR.
- Lake Forest has strong retention and graduation rates relative to Paul's clients, other Midwest schools, and the College's competitors. Among 24 top competitors, the College is 9th in retention and 6th in four-year graduation rate.
- The impending demographic cliff will change the enrollment landscape, seriously challenging many small private colleges. Paul anticipates a number of college closures within the next two decades.
 - High school graduates in the U.S. will decline by 10% from 2026-2037, by 14% in the Midwest, and by 21% in Illinois.

- Meanwhile, a larger cohort within the total college-going population will have less academic preparation and ability to pay.
- Lake Forest has a varied and challenging competitor set when compared with Paul's other 50 clients.
 - This reflects the College's location in the Midwest, with its abundance of institutions, and its varied pipelines of students and national and international draw.
 - The College's top competition is larger private and public state institutions: Loyola, DePaul, University of Illinois, UIC.
 - Out-of-state publics have increased their market share in Illinois, from 13.6% in 2008 to 20.1% in 2018.

Paul said Lake Forest was one of the few colleges among his clients to grow enrollment. He felt further growth within existing cohorts and pipelines would be challenging. Growing ANTR will be constrained by worsening demographic trends, increased competitor discounting, and the College's commitment to serving a socioeconomically diverse population.